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THE WORKS

OF

ALFRED LORD TENNYSON

IN SIX VOLUMES

VOLUME IV

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
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Emily, Lady Tennyson
from a drawing by G.F. Watts, R.A.

THE WORKS OF

ALFRED

LORD TENNYSON

VOLUME IV

ANNOTATED BY

ALFRED LORD TENNYSON

EDITED BY

HALLAM LORD TENNYSON

New York

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THE

LOVER'S TALE.

THE original Preface to 'The Lover's Tale' states that it was composed in my nineteenth year. Two only of the three parts then written were printed, when, feeling the imperfection of the poem, I withdrew it from the press. One of my friends however who, boylike, admired the boy's work, distributed among our common associates of that hour some copies of these two parts, without my knowledge, without the omissions and amendments which I had in contemplation, and marred by the many misprints of the compositor. Seeing that these two parts have of late been mercilessly pirated, and that what I had deemed scarce worthy to live is not allowed to die, may I not be pardoned if I suffer the whole poem at last to come into the light —accompanied with a reprint of the sequel—a work of my mature life—'The Golden Supper'?

May 1879.

ARGUMENT.

JULIAN, whose cousin and foster-sister, Camilla, has been wedded to his friend and rival, Lionel, endeavours to narrate the story of his own love for her, and the strange sequel. He speaks (in Parts II. and III.) of having been haunted by visions and the sound of bells, tolling for a funeral, and at last ringing for a marriage; but he breaks away, overcome, as he approaches the Event, and a witness to it completes the tale.

I.

HERE far away, seen from the topmost cliff,
Filling with purple gloom the vacancies
Between the tufted hills, the sloping seas
Hung in mid-heaven, and half-way down rare sails,
White as white clouds, floated from sky to sky.
Oh! pleasant breast of waters, quiet bay,
Like to a quiet mind in the loud world,
Where the chafed breakers of the outer sea

Sank powerless, as anger falls aside
And withers on the breast of peaceful love;
Thou didst receive the growth of pines that fledged
The hills that watch'd thee, as Love watcheth Love,
In thine own essence, and delight thyself
To make it wholly thine on sunny days.
Keep thou thy name of 'Lover's Bay.' See, sirs,
Even now the Goddess of the Past, that takes
The heart, and sometimes touches but one string
That quivers, and is silent, and sometimes
Sweeps suddenly all its half-moulder'd chords
To some old melody, begins to play
That air which pleased her first. I feel thy breath;
I come, great Mistress of the ear and eye:
Thy breath is of the pinewood; and tho' years
Have hollow'd out a deep and stormy strait
Betwixt the native land of Love and me,
Breathe but a little on me, and the sail
Will draw me to the rising of the sun,
The lucid chambers of the morning star,
And East of Life.

Permit me, friend, I prythee,
To pass my hand across my brows, and muse
On those dear hills, that never more will meet
The sight that throbs and aches beneath my touch,
As tho' there beat a heart in either eye;
For when the outer lights are darken'd thus,
The memory's vision hath a keener edge.
It grows upon me now—the semicircle
Of dark-blue waters and the narrow fringe
Of curving beach—its wreaths of dripping green—
Its pale pink shells—the summerhouse aloft
That open'd on the pines with doors of glass,
A mountain nest—the pleasure-boat that rock'd,
Light-green with its own shadow, keel to keel,
Upon the dappled dimplings of the wave,
That blanch'd upon its side.

O Love, O Hope!
They come, they crowd upon me all at once—
Moved from the cloud of unforgotten things,
That sometimes on the horizon of the mind

Lies folded, often sweeps athwart in storm—
Flash upon flash they lighten thro' me—days
Of dewy dawning and the amber eves
When thou and I, Camilla, thou and I
Were borne about the bay or safely moor'd
Beneath a low-brow'd cavern, where the tide
Plash'd, sapping its worn ribs; and all without
The slowly-ridging rollers on the cliffs
Clash'd, calling to each other, and thro' the arch
Down those loud waters, like a setting star,
Mixt with the gorgeous west the lighthouse shone,
And silver-smiling Venus ere she fell
Would often loiter in her balmy blue,
To crown it with herself.

Here, too, my love
Waver'd at anchor with me, when day hung
From his mid-dome in Heaven's airy halls;
Gleams of the water-circles as they broke,
Flicker'd like doubtful smiles about her lips,
Quiver'd a flying glory on her hair,

Leapt like a passing thought across her eyes;
And mine with one that will not pass, till earth
And heaven pass too, dwelt on my heaven, a face
Most starry-fair, but kindled from within
As 'twere with dawn. She was dark-hair'd, dark-eyed:
Oh, such dark eyes! a single glance of them
Will govern a whole life from birth to death,
Careless of all things else, led on with light
In trances and in visions: look at them,
You lose yourself in utter ignorance;
You cannot find their depth; for they go back,
And farther back, and still withdraw themselves
Quite into the deep soul, that evermore
Fresh springing from her fountains in the brain,
Still pouring thro', floods with redundant life
Her narrow portals.

Trust me, long ago
I should have died, if it were possible
To die in gazing on that perfectness
Which I do bear within me: I had died,

But from my farthest lapse, my latest ebb,
Thine image, like a charm of light and strength
Upon the waters, push'd me back again
On these deserted sands of barren life.
Tho' from the deep vault where the heart of Hope
Fell into dust, and crumbled in the dark—
Forgetting how to render beautiful
Her countenance with quick and healthful blood—
Thou didst not sway me upward; could I perish
While thou, a meteor of the sepulchre,
Didst swathe thyself all round Hope's quiet urn
For ever? He, that saith it, hath o'erstept
The slippery footing of his narrow wit,
And fall'n away from judgment. Thou art light,
To which my spirit leaneth all her flowers,
And length of days, and immortality
Of thought, and freshness ever self-renew'd.
For Time and Grief abode too long with Life,
And, like all other friends i' the world, at last
They grew aweary of her fellowship:
So Time and Grief did beckon unto Death,

And Death drew nigh and beat the doors of Life;
But thou didst sit alone in the inner house,
A wakeful portress, and didst parle with Death,—
'This is a charmed dwelling which I hold;'
So Death gave back, and would no further come.
Yet is my life nor in the present time,
Nor in the present place. To me alone,
Push'd from his chair of regal heritage,
The Present is the vassal of the Past:
So that, in that I *have* lived, do I live,
And cannot die, and am, in having been—
A portion of the pleasant yesterday,
Thrust forward on to-day and out of place;
A body journeying onward, sick with toil,
The weight as if of age upon my limbs,
The grasp of hopeless grief about my heart,
And all the senses weaken'd, save in that,
Which long ago they had glean'd and garner'd up
Into the granaries of memory—
The clear brow, bulwark of the precious brain,
Chink'd as you see, and seam'd—and all the while

The light soul twines and mingles with the growths
Of vigorous early days, attracted, won,
Married, made one with, molten into all
The beautiful in Past of act or place,
And like the all-enduring camel, driven
Far from the diamond fountain by the palms,
Who toils across the middle moonlit nights,
Or when the white heats of the blinding noons
Beat from the concave sand; yet in him keeps
A draught of that sweet fountain that he loves,
To stay his feet from falling, and his spirit
From bitterness of death.

Ye ask me, friends,
When I began to love. How should I tell you?
Or from the after-fulness of my heart,
Flow back again unto my slender spring
And first of love, tho' every turn and depth
Between is clearer in my life than all
Its present flow. Ye know not what ye ask.
How should the broad and open flower tell

What sort of bud it was, when, prest together
In its green sheath, close-lapt in silken folds,
It seem'd to keep its sweetness to itself,
Yet was not the less sweet for that it seem'd?
For young Life knows not when young Life was born,
But takes it all for granted: neither Love,
Warm in the heart, his cradle, can remember
Love in the womb, but resteth satisfied,
Looking on her that brought him to the light:
Or as men know not when they fall asleep
Into delicious dreams, our other life,
So know I not when I began to love.
This is my sum of knowledge—that my love
Grew with myself—say rather, was my growth,
My inward sap, the hold I have on earth,
My outward circling air wherewith I breathe,
Which yet upholds my life, and evermore
Is to me daily life and daily death:
For how should I have lived and not have loved?
Can ye take off the sweetness from the flower,
The colour and the sweetness from the rose,

And place them by themselves; or set apart
Their motions and their brightness from the stars,
And then point out the flower or the star?
Or build a wall betwixt my life and love,
And tell me where I am? 'Tis even thus:
In that I live I love; because I love
I live: whate'er is fountain to the one
Is fountain to the other; and whene'er
Our God unknits the riddle of the one,
There is no shade or fold of mystery
Swathing the other.

Many, many years,
(For they seem many and my most of life,
And well I could have linger'd in that porch,
So unproportion'd to the dwelling-place,)
In the Maydews of childhood, opposite
The flush and dawn of youth, we lived together,
Apart, alone together on those hills.

Before he saw my day my father died,
And he was happy that he saw it not;

But I and the first daisy on his grave
From the same clay came into light at once.
As Love and I do number equal years,
So she, my love, is of an age with me.
How like each other was the birth of each!
On the same morning, almost the same hour,
Under the selfsame aspect of the stars,
(Oh falsehood of all starcraft!) we were born.
How like each other was the birth of each!
The sister of my mother—she that bore
Camilla close beneath her beating heart,
Which to the imprison'd spirit of the child,
With its true-touched pulses in the flow
And hourly visitation of the blood,
Sent notes of preparation manifold,
And mellow'd echoes of the outer world—
My mother's sister, mother of my love,
Who had a twofold claim upon my heart,
One twofold mightier than the other was,
In giving so much beauty to the world,
And so much wealth as God had charged her with—

Loathing to put it from herself for ever,
Left her own life with it; and dying thus,
Crown'd with her highest act the placid face
And breathless body of her good deeds past.

So were we born, so orphan'd. She was motherless
And I without a father. So from each
Of those two pillars which from earth uphold
Our childhood, one had fallen away, and all
The careful burthen of our tender years
Trembled upon the other. He that gave
Her life, to me delightedly fulfill'd
All lovingkindnesses, all offices
Of watchful care and trembling tenderness.
He waked for both: he pray'd for both: he slept
Dreaming of both: nor was his love the less
Because it was divided, and shot forth
Boughs on each side, laden with wholesome shade,
Wherein we nested sleeping or awake,
And sang aloud the matin-song of life.

She was my foster-sister: on one arm
The flaxen ringlets of our infancies
Wander'd, the while we rested: one soft lap
Pillow'd us both: a common light of eyes
Was on us as we lay: our baby lips,
Kissing one bosom, ever drew from thence
The stream of life, one stream, one life, one blood,
One sustenance, which, still as thought grew large,
Still larger moulding all the house of thought,
Made all our tastes and fancies like, perhaps—
All—all but one; and strange to me, and sweet,
Sweet thro' strange years to know that whatsoe'er
Our general mother meant for me alone,
Our mutual mother dealt to both of us:
So what was earliest mine in earliest life,
I shared with her in whom myself remains.
As was our childhood, so our infancy,
They tell me, was a very miracle
Of fellow-feeling and communion.
They tell me that we would not be alone,—
We cried when we were parted; when I wept,

Her smile lit up the rainbow on my tears,
Stay'd on the cloud of sorrow; that we loved
The sound of one-another's voices more
Than the gray cuckoo loves his name, and learn'd
To lisp in tune together; that we slept
In the same cradle always, face to face.
Heart beating time to heart, lip pressing lip,
Folding each other, breathing on each other,
Dreaming together (dreaming of each other
They should have added), till the morning light
Sloped thro' the pines, upon the dewy pane
Falling, unseal'd our eyelids, and we woke
To gaze upon each other. If this be true,
At thought of which my whole soul languishes
And faints, and hath no pulse, no breath—as tho'
A man in some still garden should infuse
Rich atar in the bosom of the rose,
Till, drunk with its own wine, and overfull
Of sweetness, and in smelling of itself,
It fall on its own thorns—if this be true—
And that way my wish leads me evermore

Still to believe it—'tis so sweet a thought,
Why in the utter stillness of the soul
Doth question'd memory answer not, nor tell
Of this our earliest, our closest-drawn,
Most loveliest, earthly-heavenliest harmony?
O blossom'd portal of the lonely house,
Green prelude, April promise, glad new-year
Of Being, which with earliest violets
And lavish carol of clear-throated larks
Fill'd all the March of life!—I will not speak of thee,
These have not seen thee, these can never know thee,
They cannot understand me. Pass we then
A term of eighteen years. Ye would but laugh,
If I should tell you how I hoard in thought
The faded rhymes and scraps of ancient crones,
Gray relics of the nurseries of the world,
Which are as gems set in my memory,
Because she learnt them with me; or what use
To know her father left us just before
The daffodil was blown? or how we found
The dead man cast upon the shore? All this

Seems to the quiet daylight of your minds
But cloud and smoke, and in the dark of mine
Is traced with flame. Move with me to the event.
There came a glorious morning, such a one
As dawns but once a season. Mercury
On such a morning would have flung himself
From cloud to cloud, and swum with balanced wings
To some tall mountain: when I said to her,
'A day for Gods to stoop,' she answered, 'Ay,
And men to soar:' for as that other gazed,
Shading his eyes till all the fiery cloud,
The prophet and the chariot and the steeds,
Suck'd into oneness like a little star
Were drunk into the inmost blue, we stood,
When first we came from out the pines at noon,
With hands for eaves, uplooking and almost
Waiting to see some blessed shape in heaven,
So bathed we were in brilliance. Never yet
Before or after have I known the spring
Pour with such sudden deluges of light
Into the middle summer; for that day

Love, rising, shook his wings, and charged the winds
With spiced May-sweets from bound to bound, and
blew
Fresh fire into the sun, and from within
Burst thro' the heated buds, and sent his soul
Into the songs of birds, and touch'd far-off
His mountain-altars, his high hills, with flame
Milder and purer.

Thro' the rocks we wound:
The great pine shook with lonely sounds of joy
That came on the sea-wind. As mountain streams
Our bloods ran free: the sunshine seem'd to brood
More warmly on the heart than on the brow.
We often paused, and, looking back, we saw
The clefts and openings in the mountains fill'd
With the blue valley and the glistening brooks,
And all the low dark groves, a land of love!
A land of promise, a land of memory,
A land of promise flowing with the milk
And honey of delicious memories!

And down to sea, and far as eye could ken,
Each way from verge to verge a Holy Land,
Still growing holier as you near'd the bay,
For there the Temple stood.

When we had reach'd
The grassy platform on some hill, I stoop'd,
I gather'd the wild herbs, and for her brows
And mine made garlands of the selfsame flower,
Which she took smiling, and with my work thus
Crown'd her clear forehead. Once or twice she told me
(For I remember all things) to let grow
The flowers that run poison in their veins.
She said, 'The evil flourish in the world.'
Then playfully she gave herself the lie—
'Nothing in nature is unbeautiful;
So, brother, pluck and spare not.' So I wove
Ev'n the dull-blooded poppy-stem, 'whose flower,
Hued with the scarlet of a fierce sunrise,
Like to the wild youth of an evil prince,

Is without sweetness, but who crowns himself
Above the naked poisons of his heart
In his old age.' A graceful thought of hers
Grav'n on my fancy! And oh, how like a nymph,
A stately mountain nymph she look'd! how native
Unto the hills she trod on! While I gazed
My coronal slowly disentwined itself
And fell between us both; tho' while I gazed
My spirit leap'd as with those thrills of bliss
That strike across the soul in prayer, and show us
That we are surely heard. Methought a light
Burst from the garland I had wov'n, and stood
A solid glory on her bright black hair;
A light methought broke from her dark, dark eyes,
And shot itself into the singing winds;
A mystic light flash'd ev'n from her white robe
As from a glass in the sun, and fell about
My footsteps on the mountains.

Last we came
To what our people call 'The Hill of Woe.'

A bridge is there, that, look'd at from beneath
Seems but a cobweb filament to link
The yawning of an earthquake-cloven chasm.
And thence one night, when all the winds were loud,
A woful man (for so the story went)
Had thrust his wife and child and dash'd himself
Into the dizzy depth below. Below,
Fierce in the strength of far descent, a stream
Flies with a shatter'd foam along the chasm.

The path was perilous, loosely strown with crags:
We mounted slowly; yet to both there came
The joy of life in steepness overcome,
And victories of ascent, and looking down
On all that had look'd down on us; and joy
In breathing nearer heaven; and joy to me,
High over all the azure-circled earth,
To breathe with her as if in heaven itself;
And more than joy that I to her became
Her guardian and her angel, raising her
Still higher, past all peril, until she saw
Beneath her feet the region far away,

Beyond the nearest mountain's bosky brows,
Arise in open prospect—heath and hill,
And hollow lined and wooded to the lips,
And steep-down walls of battlemented rock
Gilded with broom, or shatter'd into spires,
And glory of broad waters interfused,
Whence rose as it were breath and steam of gold,
And over all the great wood rioting
And climbing, streak'd or starr'd at intervals
With falling brook or blossom'd bush—and last,
Framing the mighty landscape to the west,
A purple range of mountain-cones, between
Whose interspaces gush'd in blinding bursts
The incorporate blaze of sun and sea.

At length
Descending from the point and standing both,
There on the tremulous bridge, that from beneath
Had seem'd a gossamer filament up in air,
We paused amid the splendour. All the west
And ev'n unto the middle south was ribb'd

And barr'd with bloom on bloom. The sun below,
Held for a space 'twixt cloud and wave, shower'd down
Rays of a mighty circle, weaving over
That various wilderness a tissue of light
Unparallel'd. On the other side, the moon,
Half-melted into thin blue air, stood still,
And pale and fibrous as a wither'd leaf,
Nor yet endured in presence of His eyes
To indue his lustre; most unloverlike,
Since in his absence full of light and joy,
And giving light to others. But this most,
Next to her presence whom I loved so well,
Spoke loudly even into my inmost heart
As to my outward hearing: the loud stream,
Forth issuing from his portals in the crag
(A visible link unto the home of my heart),
Ran amber toward the west, and nigh the sea
Parting my own loved mountains was received,
Shorn of its strength, into the sympathy
Of that small bay, which out to open main
Glow'd intermingling close beneath the sun.

Spirit of Love! that little hour was bound
Shut in from Time, and dedicate to thee:
Thy fires from heaven had touch'd it, and the earth
They fell on became hallow'd evermore.

We turn'd: our eyes met: hers were bright, and mine
Were dim with floating tears, that shot the sunset
In lightnings round me; and my name was borne
Upon her breath. Henceforth my name has been
A hallow'd memory like the names of old,
A center'd, glory-circled memory,
And a peculiar treasure, brooking not
Exchange or currency: and in that hour
A hope flow'd round me, like a golden mist
Charm'd amid eddies of melodious airs,
A moment, ere the onward whirlwind shatter it,
Waver'd and floated—which was less than Hope,
Because it lack'd the power of perfect Hope;
But which was more and higher than all Hope,
Because all other Hope had lower aim;

Even that this name to which her gracious lips
Did lend such gentle utterance, this one name,
In some obscure hereafter, might inwreathe
(How lovelier, nobler then!) her life, her love,
With my life, love, soul, spirit, and heart and strength.
'Brother,' she said, 'let this be call'd henceforth
The Hill of Hope;' and I replied, 'O sister,
My will is one with thine; the Hill of Hope.'
Nevertheless, we did not change the name.

I did not speak: I could not speak my love.
Love lieth deep: Love dwells not in lip-depths.
Love wraps his wings on either side the heart,
Constraining it with kisses close and warm,
Absorbing all the incense of sweet thoughts
So that they pass not to the shrine of sound.
Else had the life of that delighted hour
Drunk in the largeness of the utterance
Of Love; but how should Earthly measure mete
The Heavenly-unmeasured or unlimited Love,
Who scarce can tune his high majestic sense

Unto the thundersong that wheels the spheres,
Scarce living in the Æolian harmony,
And flowing odour of the spacious air,
Scarce housed within the circle of this Earth,
Be cabin'd up in words and syllables,
Which pass with that which breathes them? Sooner
Earth
Might go round Heaven, and the strait girth of Time
Inswathe the fulness of Eternity,
Than language grasp the infinite of Love.

O day which did enwomb that happy hour,
Thou art blessed in the years, divinest day!
O Genius of that hour which dost uphold
Thy coronal of glory like a God,
Amid thy melancholy mates far-seen,
Who walk before thee, ever turning round
To gaze upon thee till their eyes are dim
With dwelling on the light and depth of thine,
Thy name is ever worshipp'd among hours!
Had I died then, I had not seem'd to die,

For bliss stood round me like the light of Heaven,—
Had I died then, I had not known the death;
Yea had the Power from whose right hand the light
Of Life issueth, and from whose left hand floweth
The Shadow of Death, perennial effluences,
Whereof to all that draw the wholesome air,
Somewhile the one must overflow the other;
Then had he stemm'd my day with night, and driven
My current to the fountain whence it sprang,—
Even his own abiding excellence—
On me, methinks, that shock of gloom had fall'n
Unfelt, and in this glory I had merged
The other, like the sun I gazed upon,
Which seeming for the moment due to death,
And dipping his head low beneath the verge,
Yet bearing round about him his own day,
In confidence of unabated strength,
Steppeth from Heaven to Heaven, from light to light,
And holdeth his undimmed forehead far
Into a clearer zenith, pure of cloud.

We trod the shadow of the downward hill;
We past from light to dark. On the other side
Is scoop'd a cavern and a mountain hall,
Which none have fathom'd. If you go far in
(The country people rumour) you may hear
The moaning of the woman and the child,
Shut in the secret chambers of the rock.
I too have heard a sound—perchance of streams
Running far on within its inmost halls,
The home of darkness; but the cavern-mouth,
Half overtrailed with a wanton weed,
Gives birth to a brawling brook, that passing lightly
Adown a natural stair of tangled roots,
Is presently received in a sweet grave
Of eglantines, a place of burial
Far lovelier than its cradle; for unseen,
But taken with the sweetness of the place,
It makes a constant bubbling melody
That drowns the nearer echoes. Lower down
Spreads out a little lake, that, flooding, leaves
Low banks of yellow sand; and from the woods

That belt it rise three dark, tall cypresses,—
Three cypresses, symbols of mortal woe,
That men plant over graves.

Hither we came,
And sitting down upon the golden moss,
Held converse sweet and low—low converse sweet,
In which our voices bore least part. The wind
Told a lovetale beside us, how he woo'd
The waters, and the waters answering lisp'd
To kisses of the wind, that, sick with love,
Fainted at intervals, and grew again
To utterance of passion. Ye cannot shape
Fancy so fair as is this memory.
Methought all excellence that ever was
Had drawn herself from many thousand years,
And all the separate Edens of this earth,
To centre in this place and time. I listen'd,
And her words stole with most prevailing sweetness
Into my heart, as thronging fancies come
To boys and girls when summer days are new,

And soul and heart and body are all at ease:
What marvel my Camilla told me all?
It was so happy an hour, so sweet a place,
And I was as the brother of her blood,
And by that name I moved upon her breath;
Dear name, which had too much of nearness in it
And heralded the distance of this time!
At first her voice was very sweet and low,
As if she were afraid of utterance;
But in the onward current of her speech,
(As echoes of the hollow-banked brooks
Are fashion'd by the channel which they keep),
Her words did of their meaning borrow sound,
Her cheek did catch the colour of her words.
I heard and trembled, yet I could but hear;
My heart paused—my raised eyelids would not fall,
But still I kept my eyes upon the sky.
I seem'd the only part of Time stood still,
And saw the motion of all other things;
While her words, syllable by syllable,
Like water, drop by drop, upon my ear

Fell; and I wish'd, yet wish'd her not to speak;
But she spake on, for I did name no wish,
What marvel my Camilla told me all
Her maiden dignities of Hope and Love—
'Perchance,' she said, 'return'd.' Even then the stars
Did tremble in their stations as I gazed;
But she spake on, for I did name no wish,
No wish—no hope. Hope was not wholly dead,
But breathing hard at the approach of Death,—
Camilla, my Camilla, who was mine
No longer in the dearest sense of mine—
For all the secret of her inmost heart,
And all the maiden empire of her mind,
Lay like a map before me, and I saw
There, where I hoped myself to reign as king,
There, where that day I crown'd myself as king,
There in my realm and even on my throne,
Another! then it seem'd as tho' a link
Of some tight chain within my inmost frame
Was riven in twain: that life I heeded not
Flow'd from me, and the darkness of the grave,

The darkness of the grave and utter night,
Did swallow up my vision; at her feet,
Even the feet of her I loved, I fell,
Smit with exceeding sorrow unto Death.

Then had the earth beneath me yawning cloven
With such a sound as when an iceberg splits
From cope to base—had Heaven from all her doors,
With all her golden thresholds clashing, roll'd
Her heaviest thunder—I had lain as dead,
Mute, blind and motionless as then I lay;
Dead, for henceforth there was no life for me!
Mute, for henceforth what use were words to me!
Blind, for the day was as the night to me!
The night to me was kinder than the day;
The night in pity took away my day,
Because my grief as yet was newly born
Of eyes too weak to look upon the light;
And thro' the hasty notice of the ear
Frail Life was startled from the tender love
Of him she brooded over. Would I had lain

Until the plaited ivy-tress had wound
Round my worn limbs, and the wild brier had driven
Its knotted thorns thro' my unpaining brows,
Leaning its roses on my faded eyes.
The wind had blown above me, and the rain
Had fall'n upon me, and the gilded snake
Had nestled in this bosom-throne of Love,
But I had been at rest for evermore.

Long time entrancement held me. All too soon
Life (like a wanton too-officious friend,
Who will not *hear* denial, vain and rude
With proffer of unwish'd-for services)
Entering all the avenues of sense
Past thro' into his citadel, the brain,
With hated warmth of apprehensiveness.
And first the chillness of the sprinkled brook
Smote on my brows, and then I seem'd to hear
Its murmur, as the drowning seaman hears,
Who with his head below the surface dropt
Listens the muffled booming indistinct

Of the confused floods, and dimly knows
His head shall rise no more: and then came in
The white light of the weary moon above,
Diffused and molten into flaky cloud.
Was my sight drunk that it did shape to me
Him who should own that name? Were it not well
If so be that the echo of that name
Ringing within the fancy had updrawn
A fashion and a phantasm of the form
It should attach to? Phantom!—had the ghastliest
That ever lusted for a body, sucking
The foul steam of the grave to thicken by it,
There in the shuddering moonlight brought its face
And what it has for eyes as close to mine
As he did—better that than his, than he
The friend, the neighbour, Lionel, the beloved,
The loved, the lover, the happy Lionel,
The low-voiced, tender-spirited Lionel,
All joy, to whom my agony was a joy.
O how her choice did leap forth from his eyes!
O how her love did clothe itself in smiles

About his lips! and—not one moment's grace—
Then when the effect weigh'd seas upon my head
To come my way! to twit me with the cause!

Was not the land as free thro' all her ways
To him as me? Was not his wont to walk
Between the going light and growing night?
Had I not learnt my loss before he came?
Could that be more because he came my way?
Why should he not come my way if he would?
And yet to-night, to-night—when all my wealth
Flash'd from me in a moment and I fell
Beggar'd for ever—why *should* he come my way
Robed in those robes of light I must not wear,
With that great crown of beams about his brows—
Come like an angel to a damned soul,
To tell him of the bliss he had with God—
Come like a careless and a greedy heir
That scarce can wait the reading of the will
Before he takes possession? Was mine a mood
To be invaded rudely, and not rather

A sacred, secret, unapproached woe,
Unspeakable? I was shut up with Grief;
She took the body of my past delight,
Narded and swathed and balm'd it for herself,
And laid it in a sepulchre of rock
Never to rise again. I was led mute
Into her temple like a sacrifice;
I was the High Priest in her holiest place,
Not to be loudly broken in upon.

Oh friend, thoughts deep and heavy as these well-nigh
O'erbore the limits of my brain: but he
Bent o'er me, and my neck his arm upstay'd.
I thought it was an adder's fold, and once
I strove to disengage myself, but fail'd,
Being so feeble: she bent above me, too;
Wan was her cheek; for whatsoe'er of blight
Lives in the dewy touch of pity had made
The red rose there a pale one—and her eyes
I saw the moonlight glitter on their tears—

And some few drops of that distressful rain
Fell on my face, and her long ringlets moved,
Drooping and beaten by the breeze, and brush'd
My fallen forehead in their to and fro,
For in the sudden anguish of her heart
Loosed from their simple thrall they had flow'd abroad,
And floated on and parted round her neck,
Mantling her form halfway. She, when I woke,
Something she ask'd, I know not what, and ask'd,
Unanswer'd, since I spake not; for the sound
Of that dear voice so musically low,
And now first heard with any sense of pain,
As it had taken life away before,
Choked all the syllables, that strove to rise
From my full heart.

The blissful lover, too,
From his great hoard of happiness distill'd
Some drops of solace; like a vain rich man,
That, having always prosper'd in the world,
Folding his hands, deals comfortable words

To hearts wounded for ever; yet, in truth,
Fair speech was his and delicate of phrase,
Falling in whispers on the sense, address'd
More to the inward than the outward ear,
As rain of the midsummer midnight soft,
Scarce-heard, recalling fragrance and the green
Of the dead spring: but mine was wholly dead,
No bud, no leaf, no flower, no fruit for me.
Yet who had done, or who had suffer'd wrong?
And why was I to darken their pure love,
If, as I found, they two did love each other,
Because my own was darken'd? Why was I
To cross between their happy star and them?
To stand a shadow by their shining doors,
And vex them with my darkness? Did I love her?
Ye know that I did love her; to this present
My full-orb'd love has waned not. Did I love her,
And could I look upon her tearful eyes?
What had *she* done to weep? Why should *she* weep?
O innocent of spirit—let my heart
Break rather—whom the gentlest airs of Heaven

Should kiss with an unwonted gentleness.
Her love did murder mine? What then? She
deem'd
I wore a brother's mind: she call'd me brother:
She told me all her love: she shall not weep.

The brightness of a burning thought, awhile
In battle with the glooms of my dark will,
Moonlike emerged, and to itself lit up
There on the depth of an unfathom'd woe
Reflex of action. Starting up at once,
As from a dismal dream of my own death,
I, for I loved her, lost my love in Love;
I, for I loved her, graspt the hand she lov'd,
And laid it in her own, and sent my cry
Thro' the blank night to Him who loving made
The happy and the unhappy love, that He
Would hold the hand of blessing over them,
Lionel, the happy, and her, and her, his bride!
Let them so love that men and boys may say,
'Lo! how they love each other!' till their love

Shall ripen to a proverb, unto all
Known, when their faces are forgot in the land—
One golden dream of love, from which may death
Awake them with heaven's music in a life
More living to some happier happiness,
Swallowing its precedent in victory.
And as for me, Camilla, as for me,—
The dew of tears is an unwholesome dew,
They will but sicken the sick plant the more.
Deem that I love thee but as brothers do,
So shalt thou love me still as sisters do;
Or if thou dream aught farther, dream but how
I could have loved thee, had there been none else
To love as lovers, loved again by thee.

Or this, or somewhat like to this, I spake,
When I beheld her weep so ruefully;
For sure my love should ne'er indue the front
And mask of Hate, who lives on others' moans.
Shall Love pledge Hatred in her bitter draughts,
And batten on her poisons? Love forbid!

Love passeth not the threshold of cold Hate,
And Hate is strange beneath the roof of Love.
O Love, if thou be'st Love, dry up these tears
Shed for the love of Love; for tho' mine image,
The subject of thy power, be cold in her,
Yet, like cold snow, it melteth in the source
Of these sad tears, and feeds their downward flow.
So Love, arraign'd to judgment and to death,
Received unto himself a part of blame,
Being guiltless, as an innocent prisoner,
Who, when the woful sentence hath been past,
And all the clearness of his fame hath gone
Beneath the shadow of the curse of man,
First falls asleep in swoon, wherefrom awaked,
And looking round upon his tearful friends,
Forthwith and in his agony conceives
A shameful sense as of a cleaving crime—
For whence without some guilt should such grief be?

So died that hour, and fell into the abysm
Of forms outworn, but not to me outworn,

Who never hail'd another—was there one?
There might be one—one other, worth the life
That made it sensible. So that hour died
Like odour rapt into the winged wind
Borne into alien lands and far away.

There be some hearts so airily built, that they,
They—when their love is wreck'd—if Love can wreck—
On that sharp ridge of utmost doom ride highly
Above the perilous seas of Change and Chance;
Nay, more, hold out the lights of cheerfulness;
As the tall ship, that many a dreary year
Knit to some dismal sandbank far at sea,
All thro' the livelong hours of utter dark,
Showers slanting light upon the dolorous wave.
For me—what light, what gleam on those black ways
Where Love could walk with banish'd Hope no more?

It was ill-done to part you, Sisters fair;
Love's arms were wreath'd about the neck of Hope,

And Hope kiss'd Love, and Love drew in her breath
In that close kiss, and drank her whisper'd tales.
They said that Love would die when Hope was gone,
And Love mourn'd long, and sorrow'd after Hope;
At last she sought out Memory, and they trod
The same old paths where Love had walk'd with Hope,
And Memory fed the soul of Love with tears.

II.

From that time forth I would not see her more;
But many weary moons I lived alone—
Alone, and in the heart of the great forest.
Sometimes upon the hills beside the sea
All day I watch'd the floating isles of shade,
And sometimes on the shore, upon the sands
Insensibly I drew her name, until
The meaning of the letters shot into
My brain; anon the wanton billow wash'd
Them over, till they faded like my love.
The hollow caverns heard me—the black brooks
Of the midforest heard me—the soft winds,
Laden with thistledown and seeds of flowers,
Paused in their course to hear me, for my voice
Was all of thee: the merry linnet knew me,
The squirrel knew me, and the dragonfly

Shot by me like a flash of purple fire.
The rough brier tore my bleeding palms; the hemlock,
Brow-high, did strike my forehead as I past;
Yet trod I not the wildflower in my path,
Nor bruised the wildbird's egg.

Was this the end?
Why grew we then together in one plot?
Why fed we from one fountain? drew one sun?
Why were our mothers' branches of one stem?
Why were we one in all things, save in that
Where to have been one had been the cope and crown
Of all I hoped and fear'd?—if that same nearness
Were father to this distance, and that *one*
Vaunt courier to this *double?* if Affection
Living slew Love, and Sympathy hew'd out
The bosom-sepulchre of Sympathy?

Chiefly I sought the cavern and the hill
Where last we roam'd together, for the sound
Of the loud stream was pleasant, and the wind

Came wooingly with woodbine smells. Sometimes
All day I sat within the cavern-mouth,
Fixing my eyes on those three cypress-cones
That spired above the wood; and with mad hand
Tearing the bright leaves of the ivy-screen,
I cast them in the noisy brook beneath,
And watch'd them till they vanish'd from my sight
Beneath the bower of wreathed eglantines:
And all the fragments of the living rock
(Huge blocks, which some old trembling of the world
Had loosen'd from the mountain, till they fell
Half-digging their own graves) these in my agony
Did I make bare of all the golden moss,
Wherewith the dashing runnel in the spring
Had liveried them all over. In my brain
The spirit seem'd to flag from thought to thought,
As moonlight wandering thro' a mist: my blood
Crept like marsh drains thro' all my languid limbs;
The motions of my heart seem'd far within me,
Unfrequent, low, as tho' it told its pulses;
And yet it shook me, that my frame would shudder,

As if 'twere drawn asunder by the rack.
But over the deep graves of Hope and Fear,
And all the broken palaces of the Past,
Brooded one master-passion evermore,
Like to a low-hung and a fiery sky
Above some fair metropolis, earth-shock'd,—
Hung round with ragged rims and burning folds,—
Embathing all with wild and woful hues,
Great hills of ruins, and collapsed masses
Of thundershaken columns indistinct,
And fused together in the tyrannous light—
Ruins, the ruin of all my life and me!

Sometimes I thought Camilla was no more,
Some one had told me she was dead, and ask'd
If I would see her burial: then I seem'd
To rise, and through the forest-shadow borne
With more than mortal swiftness, I ran down
The steepy sea-bank, till I came upon
The rear of a procession, curving round
The silver-sheeted bay: in front of which

Six stately virgins, all in white, upbare
A broad earth-sweeping pall of whitest lawn,
Wreathed round the bier with garlands: in the distance,
From out the yellow woods upon the hill
Look'd forth the summit and the pinnacles
Of a gray steeple—thence at intervals
A low bell tolling. All the pageantry,
Save those six virgins which upheld the bier,
Were stoled from head to foot in flowing black;
One walk'd abreast with me, and veil'd his brow,
And he was loud in weeping and in praise
Of her, we follow'd: a strong sympathy
Shook all my soul: I flung myself upon him
In tears and cries: I told him all my love,
How I had loved her from the first; whereat
He shrank and howl'd, and from his brow drew back
His hand to push me from him; and the face,
The very face and form of Lionel
Flash'd thro' my eyes into my innermost brain,
And at his feet I seem'd to faint and fall,

To fall and die away. I could not rise
Albeit I strove to follow. They past on,
The lordly Phantasms! in their floating folds
They past and were no more: but I had fallen
Prone by the dashing runnel on the grass.

Alway the inaudible invisible thought,
Artificer and subject, lord and slave,
Shaped by the audible and visible,
Moulded the audible and visible;
All crisped sounds of wave and leaf and wind,
Flatter'd the fancy of my fading brain;
The cloud-pavilion'd element, the wood,
The mountain, the three cypresses, the cave,
Storm, sunset, glows and glories of the moon
Below black firs, when silent-creeping winds
Laid the long night in silver streaks and bars,
Were wrought into the tissue of my dream:
The moanings in the forest, the loud brook,
Cries of the partridge like a rusty key
Turn'd in a lock, owl-whoop and dorhawk-whirr

Awoke me not, but were a part of sleep,
And voices in the distance calling to me
And in my vision bidding me dream on,
Like sounds without the twilight realm of dreams,
Which wander round the bases of the hills,
And murmur at the low-dropt eaves of sleep,
Half-entering the portals. Oftentimes
The vision had fair prelude, in the end
Opening on darkness, stately vestibules
To caves and shows of Death: whether the mind,
With some revenge—even to itself unknown,—
Made strange division of its suffering
With her, whom to have suffering view'd had been
Extremest pain; or that the clear-eyed Spirit,
Being blunted in the Present, grew at length
Prophetical and prescient of whate'er
The Future had in store: or that which most
Enchains belief, the sorrow of my spirit
Was of so wide a compass it took in
All I had loved, and my dull agony,

Ideally to her transferr'd, became
Anguish intolerable.

The day waned;
Alone I sat with her: about my brow
Her warm breath floated in the utterance
Of silver-chorded tones: her lips were sunder'd
With smiles of tranquil bliss, which broke in light
Like morning from her eyes—her eloquent eyes,
(As I have seen them many a hundred times)
Fill'd all with pure clear fire, thro' mine down rain'd
Their spirit-searching splendours. As a vision
Unto a haggard prisoner, iron-stay'd
In damp and dismal dungeons underground,
Confined on points of faith, when strength is shock'd
With torment, and expectancy of worse
Upon the morrow, thro' the ragged walls,
All unawares before his half-shut eyes,
Comes in upon him in the dead of night,
And with the excess of sweetness and of awe,
Makes the heart tremble, and the sight run over

Upon his steely gyves; so those fair eyes
Shone on my darkness, forms which ever stood
Within the magic cirque of memory,
Invisible but deathless, waiting still
The edict of the will to reassume
The semblance of those rare realities
Of which they were the mirrors. Now the light
Which was their life, burst through the cloud of thought
Keen, irrepressible.

It was a room
Within the summer-house of which I spake,
Hung round with paintings of the sea, and one
A vessel in mid-ocean, her heaved prow
Clambering, the mast bent and the ravin wind
In her sail roaring. From the outer day,
Betwixt the close-set ivies came a broad
And solid beam of isolated light,
Crowded with driving atomies, and fell
Slanting upon that picture, from prime youth

Well-known well-loved. She drew it long ago
Forthgazing on the waste and open sea,
One morning when the upblown billow ran
Shoreward beneath red clouds, and I had pour'd
Into the shadowing pencil's naked forms
Colour and life: it was a bond and seal
Of friendship, spoken of with tearful smiles;
A monument of childhood and of love;
The poesy of childhood; my lost love
Symbol'd in storm. We gazed on it together
In mute and glad remembrance, and each heart
Grew closer to the other, and the eye
Was riveted and charm-bound, gazing like
The Indian on a still-eyed snake, low-couch'd—
A beauty which is death; when all at once
That painted vessel, as with inner life,
Began to heave upon that painted sea;
An earthquake, my loud heart-beats, made the ground
Reel under us, and all at once, soul, life
And breath and motion, past and flow'd away
To those unreal billows: round and round

A whirlwind caught and bore us; mighty gyres
Rapid and vast, of hissing spray wind-driven
Far thro' the dizzy dark. Aloud she shriek'd;
My heart was cloven with pain; I wound my arms
About her: we whirl'd giddily; the wind
Sung; but I clasp'd her without fear: her weight
Shrank in my grasp, and over my dim eyes,
And parted lips which drank her breath, down-hung
The jaws of Death: I, groaning, from me flung
Her empty phantom: all the sway and whirl
Of the storm dropt to windless calm, and I
Down welter'd thro' the dark ever and ever.

III.

I CAME one day and sat among the stones
Strewn in the entry of the moaning cave;
A morning air, sweet after rain, ran over
The rippling levels of the lake, and blew
Coolness and moisture and all smells of bud
And foliage from the dark and dripping woods
Upon my fever'd brows that shook and throbb'd
From temple unto temple. To what height
The day had grown I know not. Then came on me
The hollow tolling of the bell, and all
The vision of the bier. As heretofore
I walk'd behind with one who veil'd his brow.
Methought by slow degrees the sullen bell
Toll'd quicker, and the breakers on the shore
Sloped into louder surf: those that went with me,
And those that held the bier before my face,
Moved with one spirit round about the bay,
Trod swifter steps; and while I walk'd with these

In marvel at that gradual change, I thought
Four bells instead of one began to ring,
Four merry bells, four merry marriage-bells,
In clanging cadence jangling peal on peal—
A long loud clash of rapid marriage-bells.
Then those who led the van, and those in rear,
Rush'd into dance, and like wild Bacchanals
Fled onward to the steeple in the woods:
I, too, was borne along and felt the blast
Beat on my heated eyelids: all at once
The front rank made a sudden halt; the bells
Lapsed into frightful stillness; the surge fell
From thunder into whispers; those six maids
With shrieks and ringing laughter on the sand
Threw down the bier; the woods upon the hill
Waved with a sudden gust that sweeping down
Took the edges of the pall, and blew it far
Until it hung, a little silver cloud
Over the sounding seas: I turn'd: my heart
Shrank in me, like a snowflake in the hand,
Waiting to see the settled countenance

Of her I loved, adorn'd with fading flowers.
But she from out her death-like chrysalis,
She from her bier, as into fresher life,
My sister, and my cousin, and my love,
Leapt lightly clad in bridal white—her hair
Studded with one rich Provence rose—a light
Of smiling welcome round her lips—her eyes
And cheeks as bright as when she climb'd the hill
One hand she reach'd to those that came behind,
And while I mused nor yet endured to take
So rich a prize, the man who stood with me
Stept gaily forward, throwing down his robes,
And claspt her hand in his: again the bells
Jangled and clang'd: again the stormy surf
Crash'd in the shingle: and the whirling rout
Led by those two rush'd into dance, and fled
Wind-footed to the steeple in the woods,
Till they were swallow'd in the leafy bowers,
And I stood sole beside the vacant bier.

There, there, my latest vision—then the event!

IV.

THE GOLDEN SUPPER.[1]

(*Another speaks.*)

He flies the event: he leaves the event to me:
Poor Julian—how he rush'd away; the bells,
Those marriage-bells, echoing in ear and heart—
But cast a parting glance at me, you saw,
As who should say 'Continue.' Well he had
One golden hour—of triumph shall I say?
Solace at least—before he left his home.

Would you had seen him in that hour of his!
He moved thro' all of it majestically—
Restrain'd himself quite to the close—but now—

[1] This poem is founded upon a story in Boccaccio. See Introduction, p. 3.

Whether they *were* his lady's marriage-bells,
Or prophets of them in his fantasy,
I never ask'd: but Lionel and the girl
Were wedded, and our Julian came again
Back to his mother's house among the pines.
But these, their gloom, the mountains and the Bay,
The whole land weigh'd him down as Ætna does
The Giant of Mythology: he would go,
Would leave the land for ever, and had gone
Surely, but for a whisper, 'Go not yet,'
Some warning—sent divinely—as it seem'd
By that which follow'd—but of this I deem
As of the visions that he told—the event
Glanced back upon them in his after life,
And partly made them—tho' he knew it not.

And thus he stay'd and would not look at her—
No not for months: but, when the eleventh moon
After their marriage lit the lover's Bay,
Heard yet once more the tolling bell, and said,
Would you could toll me out of life, but found—

All softly as his mother broke it to him—
A crueller reason than a crazy ear,
For that low knell tolling his lady dead—
Dead—and had lain three days without a pulse:
All that look'd on her had pronounced her dead.
And so they bore her (for in Julian's land
They never nail a dumb head up in elm),
Bore her free-faced to the free airs of heaven,
And laid her in the vault of her own kin.

What did he then? not die: he is here and hale—
Not plunge headforemost from the mountain there,
And leave the name of Lover's Leap: not he:
He knew the meaning of the whisper now,
Thought that he knew it. 'This, I stay'd for this;
O love, I have not seen you for so long.
Now, now, will I go down into the grave,
I will be all alone with all I love,
And kiss her on the lips. She is his no more:
The dead returns to me, and I go down
To kiss the dead.'

The fancy stirr'd him so
He rose and went, and entering the dim vault,
And, making there a sudden light, beheld
All round about him that which all will be.
The light was but a flash, and went again.
Then at the far end of the vault he saw
His lady with the moonlight on her face;
Her breast as in a shadow-prison, bars
Of black and bands of silver, which the moon
Struck from an open grating overhead
High in the wall, and all the rest of her
Drown'd in the gloom and horror of the vault.

'It was my wish,' he said, 'to pass, to sleep,
To rest, to be with her—till the great day
Peal'd on us with that music which rights all,
And raised us hand in hand.' And kneeling there
Down in the dreadful dust that once was man,
Dust, as he said, that once was loving hearts,
Hearts that had beat with such a love as mine—
Not such as mine, no, nor for such as her—

He softly put his arm about her neck
And kiss'd her more than once, till helpless death
And silence made him bold—nay, but I wrong him,
He reverenced his dear lady even in death;
But, placing his true hand upon her heart,
'O, you warm heart,' he moan'd, 'not even death
Can chill you all at once:' then starting, thought
His dreams had come again. 'Do I wake or sleep?
Or am I made immortal, or my love
Mortal once more?' It beat—the heart—it beat:
Faint—but it beat: at which his own began
To pulse with such a vehemence that it drown'd
The feebler motion underneath his hand.
But when at last his doubts were satisfied,
He raised her softly from the sepulchre,
And, wrapping her all over with the cloak
He came in, and now striding fast, and now
Sitting awhile to rest, but evermore
Holding his golden burthen in his arms,
So bore her thro' the solitary land
Back to the mother's house where she was born.

There the good mother's kindly ministering,
With half a night's appliances, recall'd
Her fluttering life: she rais'd an eye that ask'd
Where?' till the things familiar to her youth
Had made a silent answer: then she spoke
Here! and how came I here?' and learning it
(They told her somewhat rashly as I think)
At once began to wander and to wail,
'Ay, but you know that you must give me back:
Send! bid him come;' but Lionel was away—
Stung by his loss had vanish'd, none knew where.
'He casts me out,' she wept, 'and goes'—a wail
That seeming something, yet was nothing, born
Not from believing mind, but shatter'd nerve,
Yet haunting Julian, as her own reproof
At some precipitance in her burial.
Then, when her own true spirit had return'd,
'Oh yes, and you,' she said, 'and none but you?
For you have given me life and love again,
And none but you yourself shall tell him of it,
And you shall give me back when he returns.'

'Stay then a little,' answer'd Julian, 'here,
And keep yourself, none knowing, to yourself;
And I will do your will. I may not stay,
No, not an hour; but send me notice of him
When he returns, and then will I return,
And I will make a solemn offering of you
To him you love.' And faintly she replied,
'And I will do *your* will, and none shall know.'

Not know? with such a secret to be known.
But all their house was old and loved them both,
And all the house had known the loves of both;
Had died almost to serve them any way,
And all the land was waste and solitary:
And then he rode away; but after this,
An hour or two, Camilla's travail came
Upon her, and that day a boy was born,
Heir of his face and land, to Lionel.

And thus our lonely lover rode away,
And pausing at a hostel in a marsh,

There fever seized upon him: myself was then
Travelling that land, and meant to rest an hour;
And sitting down to such a base repast,
It makes me angry yet to speak of it—
I heard a groaning overhead, and climb'd
The moulder'd stairs (for everything was vile),
And in a loft, with none to wait on him,
Found, as it seem'd, a skeleton alone,
Raving of dead men's dust and beating hearts.

A dismal hostel in a dismal land,
A flat malarian world of reed and rush!
But there from fever and my care of him
Sprang up a friendship that may help us yet.
For while we roam'd along the dreary coast,
And waited for her message, piece by piece
I learnt the drearier story of his life;
And, tho' he loved and honour'd Lionel,
Found that the sudden wail his lady made
Dwelt in his fancy: did he know her worth,
Her beauty even? should he not be taught,

Ev'n by the price that others set upon it,
The value of that jewel he had to guard?

Suddenly came her notice and we past,
I with our lover to his native Bay.

This love is of the brain, the mind, the soul:
That makes the sequel pure; tho' some of us
Beginning at the sequel know no more.
Not such am I: and yet I say the bird
That will not hear my call, however sweet,
But if my neighbour whistle answers him—
What matter? there are others in the wood.
Yet when I saw her (and I thought him crazed,
Tho' not with such a craziness as needs
A cell and keeper), those dark eyes of hers—
Oh! such dark eyes! and not her eyes alone,
But all from these to where she touch'd on earth,
For such a craziness as Julian's look'd
No less than one divine apology.

So sweetly and so modestly she came
To greet us, her young hero in her arms!
'Kiss him,' she said. 'You gave me life again.
He, but for you, had never seen it once.
His other father you! Kiss him, and then
Forgive him, if his name be Julian too.'

Talk of lost hopes and broken heart! his own
Sent such a flame into his face, I knew
Some sudden vivid pleasure hit him there.

But he was all the more resolved to go,
And sent at once to Lionel, praying him
By that great love they both had borne the dead,
To come and revel for one hour with him
Before he left the land for evermore;
And then to friends—they were not many—who lived
Scatteringly about that lonely land of his,
And bade them to a banquet of farewells.

And Julian made a solemn feast: I never
Sat at a costlier; for all round his hall

From column on to column, as in a wood,
Not such as here—an equatorial one,
Great garlands swung and blossom'd; and beneath,
Heirlooms, and ancient miracles of Art,
Chalice and salver, wines that, Heaven knows when,
Had suck'd the fire of some forgotten sun,
And kept it thro' a hundred years of gloom,
Yet glowing in a heart of ruby—cups
Where nymph and god ran ever round in gold—
Others of glass as costly—some with gems
Moveable and resettable at will,
And trebling all the rest in value—Ah heavens!
Why need I tell you all?—suffice to say
That whatsoever such a house as his,
And his was old, has in it rare or fair
Was brought before the guest: and they, the guests,
Wonder'd at some strange light in Julian's eyes
(I told you that he had his golden hour),
And such a feast, ill-suited as it seem'd
To such a time, to Lionel's loss and his

And that resolved self-exile from a land
He never would revisit, such a feast
So rich, so strange, and stranger ev'n than rich,
But rich as for the nuptials of a king.

And stranger yet, at one end of the hall
Two great funereal curtains, looping down,
Parted a little ere they met the floor,
About a picture of his lady, taken
Some years before, and falling hid the frame.
And just above the parting was a lamp:
So the sweet figure folded round with night
Seem'd stepping out of darkness with a smile

Well then—our solemn feast—we ate and drank,
And might—the wines being of such nobleness—
Have jested also, but for Julian's eyes,
And something weird and wild about it all:
What was it? for our lover seldom spoke,
Scarce touch'd the meats; but ever and anon
A priceless goblet with a priceless wine

Arising, show'd he drank beyond his use;
And when the feast was near an end, he said:

'There is a custom in the Orient, friends—
I read of it in Persia—when a man
Will honour those who feast with him, he brings
And shows them whatsoever he accounts
Of all his treasures the most beautiful,
Gold, jewels, arms, whatever it may be.
This custom——'

Pausing here a moment, all
The guests broke in upon him with meeting hands
And cries about the banquet—'Beautiful!
Who could desire more beauty at a feast?'

The lover answer'd, 'There is more than one
Here sitting who desires it. Laud me not
Before my time, but hear me to the close.
This custom steps yet further when the guest
Is loved and honour'd to the uttermost.

For after he hath shown him gems or gold,
He brings and sets before him in rich guise
That which is thrice as beautiful as these,
The beauty that is dearest to his heart—
"O my heart's lord, would I could show you," he says,
"Ev'n my heart too." And I propose to-night
To show you what is dearest to my heart,
And my heart too.

'But solve me first a doubt.
I knew a man, nor many years ago;
He had a faithful servant, one who loved
His master more than all on earth beside.
He falling sick, and seeming close on death,
His master would not wait until he died,
But bad his menials bear him from the door,
And leave him in the public way to die.
I knew another, not so long ago,
Who found the dying servant, took him home,
And fed, and cherish'd him, and saved his life.

I ask you now, should this first master claim
His service, whom does it belong to? him
Who thrust him out, or him who saved his life?'

This question, so flung down before the guests,
And balanced either way by each, at length
When some were doubtful how the law would hold,
Was handed over by consent of all
To one who had not spoken, Lionel.

Fair speech was his, and delicate of phrase.
And he beginning languidly—his loss
Weigh'd on him yet—but warming as he went,
Glanced at the point of law, to pass it by,
Affirming that as long as either lived,
By all the laws of love and gratefulness,
The service of the one so saved was due
All to the saver—adding, with a smile,
The first for many weeks—a semi-smile
As at a strong conclusion—'body and soul
And life and limbs, all his to work his will.'

Then Julian made a secret sign to me
To bring Camilla down before them all.
And crossing her own picture as she came,
And looking as much lovelier as herself
Is lovelier than all others—on her head
A diamond circlet, and from under this
A veil, that seemed no more than gilded air,
Flying by each fine ear, an Eastern gauze
With seeds of gold—so, with that grace of hers,
Slow-moving as a wave against the wind,
That flings a mist behind it in the sun—
And bearing high in arms the mighty babe,
The younger Julian, who himself was crown'd
With roses, none so rosy as himself—
And over all her babe and her the jewels
Of many generations of his house
Sparkled and flash'd, for he had decked them out
As for a solemn sacrifice of love—
So she came in:—I am long in telling it,
I never yet beheld a thing so strange,
Sad, sweet, and strange together—floated in—

While all the guests in mute amazement rose—
And slowly pacing to the middle hall,
Before the board, there paused and stood, her breast
Hard-heaving, and her eyes upon her feet,
Not daring yet to glance at Lionel.
But him she carried, him nor lights nor feast
Dazed or amazed, nor eyes of men; who cared
Only to use his own, and staring wide
And hungering for the gilt and jewell'd world
About him, look'd, as he is like to prove,
When Julian goes, the lord of all he saw.

'My guests,' said Julian: 'you are honour'd now
Ev'n to the uttermost: in her behold
Of all my treasures the most beautiful,
Of all things upon earth the dearest to me.'
Then waving us a sign to seat ourselves,
Led his dear lady to a chair of state.
And I, by Lionel sitting, saw his face
Fire, and dead ashes and all fire again
Thrice in a second, felt him tremble too,

And heard him muttering, 'So like, so like;
She never had a sister. I knew none.
Some cousin of his and hers—O God, so like!'
And then he suddenly ask'd her if she were.
She shook, and cast her eyes down, and was dumb.
And then some other question'd if she came
From foreign lands, and still she did not speak.
Another, if the boy were hers: but she
To all their queries answer'd not a word,
Which made the amazement more, till one of them
Said, shuddering, 'Her spectre!' But his friend
Replied, in half a whisper, 'Not at least
The spectre that will speak if spoken to.
Terrible pity, if one so beautiful
Prove, as I almost dread to find her, dumb!'

But Julian, sitting by her, answer'd all:
'She is but dumb, because in her you see
That faithful servant whom we spoke about,
Obedient to her second master now;
Which will not last. I have here to-night a guest

So bound to me by common love and loss—
What! shall I bind him more? in his behalf,
Shall I exceed the Persian, giving him
That which of all things is the dearest to me,
Not only showing? and he himself pronounced
That my rich gift is wholly mine to give.

'Now all be dumb, and promise all of you
Not to break in on what I say by word
Or whisper, while I show you all my heart.'
And then began the story of his love
As here to-day, but not so wordily—
The passionate moment would not suffer that—
Past thro' his visions to the burial; thence
Down to this last strange hour in his own hall;
And then rose up, and with him all his guests
Once more as by enchantment; all but he,
Lionel, who fain had risen, but fell again,
And sat as if in chains—to whom he said:

'Take my free gift, my cousin, for your wife;
And were it only for the giver's sake,

And tho' she seem so like the one you lost,
Yet cast her not away so suddenly,
Lest there be none left here to bring her back:
I leave this land for ever.' Here he ceased.

Then taking his dear lady by one hand,
And bearing on one arm the noble babe,
He slowly brought them both to Lionel.
And there the widower husband and dead wife
Rush'd each at each with a cry, that rather seem'd
For some new death than for a life renew'd;
Whereat the very babe began to wail;
At once they turn'd, and caught and brought him in
To their charm'd circle, and, half killing him
With kisses, round him closed and claspt again.
But Lionel, when at last he freed himself
From wife and child, and lifted up a face
All over glowing with the sun of life,
And love, and boundless thanks—the sight of this
So frighted our good friend, that turning to me

And saying, 'It is over: let us go'—
There were our horses ready at the doors—
We bad them no farewell, but mounting these
He past for ever from his native land;
And I with him, my Julian, back to mine.

BALLADS

AND OTHER POEMS

TO

ALFRED TENNYSON

MY GRANDSON.

GOLDEN-HAIR'D Ally whose name is one with mine,
Crazy with laughter and babble and earth's new wine,
Now that the flower of a year and a half is thine,
O little blossom, O mine, and mine of mine,
Glorious poet who never hast written a line,
Laugh, for the name at the head of my verse is thine.
May'st thou never be wrong'd by the name that is mine!

THE FIRST QUARREL.

(IN THE ISLE OF WIGHT.)

I.

'WAIT a little,' you say, 'you are sure it'll all come right,'
But the boy was born i' trouble, an' looks so wan an' so white:
Wait! an' once I ha' waited—I hadn't to wait for long.
Now I wait, wait, wait for Harry.—No, no, you are doing me wrong!
Harry and I were married: the boy can hold up his head,
The boy was born in wedlock, but after my man was dead;

I ha' work'd for him fifteen years, an' I work an' I wait to the end.

I am all alone in the world, an' you are my only friend.

II.

Doctor, if *you* can wait, I'll tell you the tale o' my life.

When Harry an' I were children, he call'd me his own little wife;

I was happy when I was with him, an' sorry when he was away,

An' when we play'd together, I loved him better than play;

He workt me the daisy chain—he made me the cowslip ball,

He fought the boys that were rude, an' I loved him better than all.

Passionate girl tho' I was, an' often at home in disgrace,

I never could quarrel with Harry—I had but to look
in his face.

III.

There was a farmer in Dorset of Harry's kin, that had
need
Of a good stout lad at his farm; he sent, an' the father
agreed;
So Harry was bound to the Dorsetshire farm for years
an' for years;
I walked with him down to the quay, poor lad, an' we
parted in tears.
The boat was beginning to move, we heard them a-
ringing the bell,
'I'll never love any but you, God bless you, my own
little Nell.'

IV.

I was a child, an' he was a child, an' he came to harm;
There was a girl, a hussy, that workt with him up at
the farm,

One had deceived her an' left her alone with her sin
an' her shame,
And so she was wicked with Harry; the girl was the
most to blame.

v.

And years went over till I that was little had grown so
tall,
The men would say of the maids, 'Our Nelly's the
flower of 'em all.'
I didn't take heed o' *them*, but I taught myself all I
could
To make a good wife for Harry, when Harry came
home for good.

vi.

Often I seem'd unhappy, and often as happy too,
For I heard it abroad in the fields 'I'll never love any
but you;'

'I'll never love any but you' the morning song of the lark,
'I'll never love any but you' the nightingale's hymn in the dark.

VII.

And Harry came home at last, but he look'd at me sidelong and shy,
Vext me a bit, till he told me that so many years had gone by,
I had grown so handsome and tall—that I might ha' forgot him somehow—
For he thought—there were other lads—he was fear'd to look at me now.

VIII.

Hard was the frost in the field, we were married o' Christmas day,
Married among the red berries, an' all as merry as May—

Those were the pleasant times, my house an' my man were my pride,
We seem'd like ships i' the Channel a-sailing with wind an' tide.

IX.

But work was scant in the Isle, tho' he tried the villages round,
So Harry went over the Solent to see if work could be found;
An' he wrote 'I ha' six weeks' work, little wife, so far as I know;
I'll come for an hour to-morrow, an' kiss you before I go.'

X.

So I set to righting the house, for wasn't he coming that day?
An' I hit on an old deal-box that was push'd in a corner away,

It was full of old odds an' ends, an' a letter along wi' the rest,
I had better ha' put my naked hand in a hornets' nest.

XI.

'Sweetheart'—this was the letter—this was the letter I read—
'You promised to find me work near you, an' I wish I was dead—
Didn't you kiss me an' promise? you haven't done it, my lad,
An' I almost died o' your going away, an' I wish that I had.'

XII.

I too wish that I had—in the pleasant times that had past,
Before I quarrell'd with Harry—*my* quarrel—the first an' the last.

XIII.

For Harry came in, an' I flung him the letter that drove me wild,

An' he told it me all at once, as simple as any child,

'What can it matter, my lass, what I did wi' my single life?

I ha' been as true to you as ever a man to his wife;

An' *she* wasn't one o' the worst.' 'Then,' I said, 'I'm none o' the best.'

An' he smiled at me, 'Ain't you, my love? Come, come, little wife, let it rest!

The man isn't like the woman, no need to make such a stir.'

But he anger'd me all the more, an' I said 'You were keeping with her,

When I was a-loving you all along an' the same as before.'

An' he didn't speak for a while, an' he anger'd me more and more.

Then he patted my hand in his gentle way, 'Let by-gones be!'

'Bygones! you kept yours hush'd,' I said, 'when you married me!

By-gones ma' be come-agains; an' *she*—in her shame an' her sin—

You'll have her to nurse my child, if I die o' my lying in!

You'll make her its second mother! I hate her—an' I hate you!'

Ah, Harry, my man, you had better ha' beaten me black an' blue

Than ha' spoken as kind as you did, when I were so crazy wi' spite,

'Wait a little, my lass, I am sure it 'ill all come right.'

XIV.

An' he took three turns in the rain, an' I watch'd him, an' when he came in

I felt that my heart was hard, he was all wet thro' to the skin,

An' I never said 'off wi' the wet,' I never said 'on wi' the dry,'

So I knew my heart was hard, when he came to bid me goodbye.

'You said that you hated me, Ellen, but that isn't true, you know;

I am going to leave you a bit—you'll kiss me before I go?

XV.

'Going! you're going to her—kiss her—if you will,' I said—

I was near my time wi' the boy, I must ha' been light i' my head—

'I had sooner be cursed than kiss'd!'—I didn't know well what I meant,

But I turn'd my face from *him*, an' he turn'd *his* face an' he went.

XVI.

And then he sent me a letter, 'I've gotten my work
to do;
You wouldn't kiss me, my lass, an' I never loved any
but you;
I am sorry for all the quarrel an' sorry for what she
wrote,
I ha' six weeks' work in Jersey an' go to-night by the
boat.'

XVII.

An' the wind began to rise, an' I thought of him out
at sea,
An' I felt I had been to blame; he was always kind
to me.
'Wait a little, my lass, I am sure it 'ill all come
right'—
An' the boat went down that night—the boat went
down that night.

RIZPAH.

17—.

I.

Wailing, wailing, wailing, the wind over land and sea—
And Willy's voice in the wind, 'O mother, come out to me.'
Why should he call me to-night, when he knows that I cannot go?
For the downs are as bright as day, and the full moon stares at the snow.

II.

We should be seen, my dear; they would spy us out of the town.

The loud black nights for us, and the storm rushing
over the down,
When I cannot see my own hand, but am led by the
creak of the chain,
And grovel and grope for my son till I find myself
drenched with the rain.

III.

Anything fallen again? nay—what was there left to
fall?
I have taken them home, I have number'd the bones,
I have hidden them all.
What am I saying? and what are *you?* do you come
as a spy?
Falls? what falls? who knows? As the tree falls so
must it lie.

IV.

Who let her in? how long has she been? you—what
have you heard?

Why did you sit so quiet? you never have spoken a word.

O—to pray with me—yes—a lady—none of their spies—

But the night has crept into my heart, and begun to darken my eyes.

v.

Ah—you, that have lived so soft, what should *you* know of the night,

The blast and the burning shame and the bitter frost and the fright?

I have done it, while you were asleep—you were only made for the day.

I have gather'd my baby together—and now you may go your way.

vi.

Nay—for it's kind of you, Madam, to sit by an old dying wife.

But say nothing hard of my boy, I have only an hour
of life.
I kiss'd my boy in the prison, before he went out to
die.
'They dared me to do it,' he said, and he never has
told me a lie.
I whipt him for robbing an orchard once when he was
but a child—
'The farmer dared me to do it,' he said; he was
always so wild—
And idle—and couldn't be idle—my Willy—he never
could rest.
The King should have made him a soldier, he would
have been one of his best.

VII.

But he lived with a lot of wild mates, and they never
would let him be good;
They swore that he dare not rob the mail, and he
swore that he would;

And he took no life, but he took one purse, and when all was done

He flung it among his fellows—I'll none of it, said my son.

VIII.

I came into court to the Judge and the lawyers. I told them my tale,

God's own truth—but they kill'd him, they kill'd him for robbing the mail.

They hang'd him in chains for a show—we had always borne a good name—

To be hang'd for a thief—and then put away—isn't that enough shame?

Dust to dust—low down—let us hide! but they set him so high

That all the ships of the world could stare at him, passing by.

God 'ill pardon the hell-black raven and horrible fowls of the air,

But not the black heart of the lawyer who kill'd him
and hang'd him there.

IX.

And the jailer forced me away. I had bid him my
last goodbye;
They had fasten'd the door of his cell. 'O mother!'
I heard him cry.
I couldn't get back tho' I tried, he had something
further to say,
And now I never shall know it. The jailer forced
me away.

X.

Then since I couldn't but hear that cry of my boy
that was dead,
They seized me and shut me up: they fasten'd me
down on my bed.
'Mother, O mother!'—he call'd in the dark to me
year after year—

They beat me for that, they beat me—you know that
I couldn't but hear;
And then at the last they found I had grown so stupid
and still
They let me abroad again—but the creatures had
worked their will.

XI.

Flesh of my flesh was gone, but bone of my bone was
left—
I stole them all from the lawyers—and you, will you
call it a theft?—
My baby, the bones that had suck'd me, the bones
that had laughed and had cried—
Theirs? O no! they are mine—not theirs—they had
moved in my side.

XII.

Do you think I was scared by the bones? I kiss'd
'em, I buried 'em all—

I can't dig deep, I am old—in the night by the churchyard wall.

My Willy 'ill rise up whole when the trumpet of judgment 'ill sound,

But I charge you never to say that I laid him in holy ground.

XIII.

They would scratch him up—they would hang him again on the cursed tree.

Sin? O yes—we are sinners, I know—let all that be,

And read me a Bible verse of the Lord's good will toward men—

'Full of compassion and mercy, the Lord'—let me hear it again;

'Full of compassion and mercy—long-suffering.' Yes, O yes!

For the lawyer is born but to murder—the Saviour lives but to bless.

He'll never put on the black cap except for the worst of the worst,

And the first may be last—I have heard it in church
—and the last may be first.

Suffering—O long-suffering—yes, as the Lord must
know,

Year after year in the mist and the wind and the
shower and the snow.

XIV.

Heard, have you? what? they have told you he never
repented his sin.

How do they know it? are *they* his mother? are *you*
of his kin?

Heard! have you ever heard, when the storm on the
downs began,

The wind that 'ill wail like a child and the sea that
'ill moan like a man?

XV.

Election, Election and Reprobation—it's all very
well.

But I go to-night to my boy, and I shall not find him
in Hell.
For I cared so much for my boy that the Lord has
look'd into my care,
And He means me I'm sure to be happy with Willy,
I know not where.

XVI.

And if *he* be lost—but to save *my* soul, that is all your
desire:
Do you think that I care for *my* soul if my boy be gone
to the fire?
I have been with God in the dark—go, go, you may
leave me alone—
You never have borne a child—you are just as hard
as a stone.

XVII.

Madam, I beg your pardon! I think that you mean
to be kind,

But I cannot hear what you say for my Willy's voice
in the wind—
The snow and the sky so bright—he used but to call
in the dark,
And he calls to me now from the church and not from
the gibbet—for hark!
Nay—you can hear it yourself—it is coming—shaking
the walls—
Willy—the moon's in a cloud——Good-night. I am
going. He calls.

THE NORTHERN COBBLER.

I.

Waäit till our Sally cooms in, fur thou mun a' sights[1] to tell.
Eh, but I be maäin glad to seeä tha sa 'arty an' well.
'Cast awaäy on a disolut land wi' a vartical soon[2]!'
Strange fur to goä fur to think what saäilors a' seëan an' a' doon;
'Summat to drink—sa' 'ot?' I 'a nowt but Adam's wine:
What's the 'eät o' this little 'ill-side to the 'eät o' the line?

[1] The vowels *aĭ*, pronounced separately though in the closest conjunction, best render the sound of the long *i* and *y* in this dialect. But since such words as *craĭin'*, *daĭin'*, *whaĭ*, *aĭ* (I), etc., look awkward except in a page of express phonetics, I have thought it better to leave the simple *i* and *y*, and to trust that my readers will give them the broader pronunciation.

[2] The *oo* short, as in 'wood.'

II.

'What's i' tha bottle a-stanning theer?' I'll tell tha. Gin.

But if thou wants thy grog, tha mun goä fur it down to the inn.

Naay—fur I be maäin-glad, but thaw tha was iver sa dry,

Thou gits naw gin fro' the bottle theer, an' I'll tell tha why.

III.

Meä an' thy sister was married, when wur it? back-end o' June,

Ten year sin', and wa 'greed as well as a fiddle i' tune:

I could fettle and clump owd booöts and shoes wi' the best on 'em all,

As fer as fro' Thursby thurn hup to Harmsby and Hutterby Hall.

We was busy as beeäs i' the bloom an' as 'appy as
'art could think,
An' then the babby wur burn, and then I taäkes to
the drink.

IV.

An' I weänt gaäinsaäy it, my lad, thaw I be hafe
shaämed on it now,
We could sing a good song at the Plow, we could sing
a good song at the Plow;
Thaw once of a frosty night I slither'd an' hurted my
huck,[1]
An' I coom'd neck-an-crop soomtimes slaäpe down i'
the squad an' the muck:
An' once I fowt wi' the Taäilor—not hafe ov a man,
my lad—
Fur he scrawm'd an' scratted my faäce like a cat, an'
it maäde 'er sa mad
That Sally she turn'd a tongue-banger,[2] an' raäted
ma, 'Sottin' thy braäins

[1] Hip. [2] Scold.

Guzzlin' an' soäkin' an' smoäkin' an' hawmin'[1] about
i' the laänes,
Soä sow-droonk that tha doesn not touch thy 'at to the
Squire;'
An' I looök'd cock-eyed at my noäse an' I seeäd 'im
a-gittin' o' fire;
But sin' I wur hallus i' liquor an' hallus as droonk as
a king,
Foälks' coostom flitted awaäy like a kite wi' a brok-
ken string.

v.

An' Sally she wesh'd foälks' cloäths to keep the wolf
fro' the door,
Eh but the moor she riled me, she druv me to drink
the moor,
Fur I fun', when 'er back wur turn'd, wheer Sally's
owd stockin' wur 'id,
An' I grabb'd the munny she maäde, and I weär'd it
o' liquor, I did.

[1] Lounging.

VI.

An' one night I cooms 'oäm like a bull gotten loose
at a faäir,
An' she wur a-waäitin' fo'mma, an' cryin' and teärin'
'er 'aäir,
An' I tummled athurt the craädle an' sweär'd as I'd
breäk ivry stick
O' furnitur 'ere i' the 'ouse, an' I gied our Sally a
kick,
An' I mash'd the taäbles an' chairs, an' she an' the
babby beäl'd,[1]
Fur I knaw'd naw moor what I did nor a mortal beäst
o' the feäld.

VII.

An' when I waäked i' the murnin' I seeäd that our
Sally went laämed
Cos' o' the kick as I gied 'er, an' I wur dreädful
ashaämed;

[1] Bellowed, cried out.

An' Sally wur sloomy[1] an' draggle taäil'd in an owd turn gown,

An' the babby's faäce wurn't wesh'd an' the 'ole 'ouse hupside down.

VIII.

An' then I minded our Sally sa pratty an' neät an' sweeät,

Straät as a pole an' cleän as a flower fro' 'eäd to feeät:

An' then I minded the fust kiss I gied 'er by Thursby thurn;

Theer wur a lark a-singin' 'is best of a Sunday at murn,

Couldn't see 'im, we 'eärd 'im a-mountin' oop 'igher an' 'igher,

An' then 'e turn'd to the sun, an' 'e shined like a sparkle o' fire.

'Doesn't tha see 'im,' she axes, 'fur I can see 'im?' an' I

[1] Sluggish, out of spirits.

Seeäd nobbut the smile o' the sun as danced in 'er
pratty blue eye;
An' I says 'I mun gie tha a kiss,' an' Sally says 'Noä,
thou moänt,'
But I gied 'er a kiss, an' then anoother, an' Sally says
'doänt!'

IX.

An' when we coom'd into Meeätin', at fust she wur
all in a tew,
But, arter, we sing'd the 'ymn togither like birds on
a beugh;
An' Muggins 'e preäch'd o' Hell-fire an' the loov o'
God fur men,
An' then upo' coomin' awaäy Sally gied me a kiss ov
'ersen.

X.

Heer wur a fall fro' a kiss to a kick like Saätan as fell
Down out o' heaven i' Hell-fire—thaw theer's naw
drinkin' i' Hell;

Meä fur to kick our Sally as kep the wolf fro' the door,
All along o' the drink, fur I loov'd 'er as well as afoor.

XI.

Sa like a greät num-cumpus I blubber'd awaäy o' the bed—
'Weänt niver do it naw moor;' an' Sally looökt up an' she said,
'I'll upowd it[1] tha weänt; thou'rt like the rest o' the men,
Thou'll goä sniffin' about the tap till tha does it ageän.
Theer's thy hennemy, man, an' I knaws, as knaws tha sa well,
That, if tha seeäs 'im an' smells 'im tha'll foller 'im slick into Hell.'

XII.

'Naäy,' says I, 'fur I weänt goä sniffin' about the tap.'
'Weänt tha?' she says, an' mysen I thowt i' mysen 'mayhap.'

[1] I'll uphold it.

'Noä:' an' I started awaäy like a shot, an' down to the Hinn,
An' I browt what tha seeäs stannin' theer, yon big black bottle o' gin.

XIII.

'That caps owt,'[1] says Sally, an' saw she begins to cry,
But I puts it inter 'er 'ands an' I says to 'er, 'Sally,' says I,
'Stan' 'im theer i' the naäme o' the Lord an' the power ov 'is Graäce,
Stan' 'im theer, fur I'll looök my hennemy straït i' the faäce,
Stan' 'im theer i' the winder, an' let ma looök at 'im then,
'E seeäms naw moor nor watter, an' 'e's the Divil's oän sen.'

XIV.

An' I wur down i' tha mouth, couldn't do naw work an' all,

[1] That's beyond everything.

Nasty an' snaggy an' shaäky, an' poonch'd my 'and wi' the hawl,
But she wur a power o' coomfut, an' sattled 'ersen o' my knee,
An' coäxd an' coodled me oop till ageän I feel'd mysen free.

XV.

An' Sally she tell'd it about, an' foälk stood a-gawmin'[1] in,
As thaw it wur summat bewitch'd istead of a quart o' gin;
An' some on 'em said it wur watter—an' I wur chousin' the wife,
Fur I couldn't 'owd 'ands off gin, wur it nobbut to saäve my life;
An' blacksmith 'e strips me the thick ov 'is airm, an' 'e shaws it to me,
'Feëal thou this! thou can't graw this upo' watter!' says he.

[1] Staring vacantly.

An' Doctor 'e calls o' Sunday an' just as candles was lit,
'Thou moänt do it,' he says, 'tha mun breäk 'im off bit by bit.'
'Thou'rt but a Methody-man,' says Parson, and laäys down 'is 'at,
An' 'e points to the bottle o' gin, 'but I respecks tha fur that;'
An' Squire, his oän very sen, walks down fro' the 'All to see,
An' 'e spanks 'is 'and into mine, 'fur I respecks tha,' says 'e;
An' coostom ageän draw'd in like a wind fro' far an' wide,
And browt me the booöts to be cobbled fro' hafe the coontryside.

XVI.

An' theer 'e stans an' theer 'e shall stan to my dying daäy;

I 'a gotten to loov 'im ageän in anoother kind of a waäy,
Proud on 'im, like, my lad, an' I keeäps 'im cleän an' bright,
Loovs 'im, an' roobs 'im, an' doosts 'im, an' puts 'im back i' the light.

XVII.

Wouldn't a pint a' sarved as well as a quart? Naw doubt:
But I liked a bigger feller to fight wi' an' fowt it out.
Fine an' meller 'e mun be by this, if I cared to taäste,
But I moänt, my lad, and I weänt, fur I'd feäl mysen cleän disgraäced.

XVIII.

An' once I said to the Missis, 'My lass, when I cooms to die,
Smash the bottle to smithers, the Divil's in 'im,' said I.

But arter I chaänged my mind, an' if Sally be left aloän,
I'll hev 'im a-buried wi'mma an' taäke 'im afoor the Throän.

XIX.

Coom thou 'eer—yon laädy a-steppin' along the streeät,
Doesn't tha knaw 'er—sa pratty, an' feät, an' neät, an' sweeät?
Look at the cloäths on 'er back, thebbe ammost spick-span-new,
An' Tommy's faäce be as fresh as a codlin wesh'd ' the dew.

XX.

'Ere be our Sally an' Tommy, an' we be a-goin to dine,
Baäcon an' taätes, an' a beslings-puddin'[1] an' Adam's wine;

[1] A pudding made with the first milk of the cow after calving.

But if tha wants ony grog tha mun goä fur it down to the Hinn,

Fur I weänt shed a drop on 'is blood, noä, not fur Sally's oän kin.

THE REVENGE.

A BALLAD OF THE FLEET.

I.

At Flores in the Azores Sir Richard Grenville lay,
And a pinnace, like a flutter'd bird, came flying from far away:
'Spanish ships of war at sea! we have sighted fifty-three!'
Then sware Lord Thomas Howard: ''Fore God I am no coward;
But I cannot meet them here, for my ships are out of gear,
And the half my men are sick. I must fly, but follow quick.
We are six ships of the line; can we fight with fifty-three?'

II.

Then spake Sir Richard Grenville: 'I know you are
no coward;
You fly them for a moment to fight with them again.
But I've ninety men and more that are lying sick
ashore.
I should count myself the coward if I left them, my
Lord Howard,
To these Inquisition dogs and the devildoms of Spain.'

III.

So Lord Howard past away with five ships of war that
day,
Till he melted like a cloud in the silent summer
heaven;
But Sir Richard bore in hand all his sick men from
the land
Very carefully and slow,
Men of Bideford in Devon,

And we laid them on the ballast down below;
For we brought them all aboard,
And they blest him in their pain, that they were not left to Spain,
To the thumbscrew and the stake, for the glory of the Lord.

IV.

He had only a hundred seamen to work the ship and to fight,
And he sailed away from Flores till the Spaniard came in sight,
With his huge sea-castles heaving upon the weather bow.
'Shall we fight or shall we fly?
Good Sir Richard, tell us now,
For to fight is but to die!
There'll be little of us left by the time this sun be set.'
And Sir Richard said again: 'We be all good English men.

Let us bang these dogs of Seville, the children of the devil,
For I never turn'd my back upon Don or devil yet.'

v.

Sir Richard spoke and he laugh'd, and we roar'd a hurrah, and so
The little Revenge ran on sheer into the heart of the foe,
With her hundred fighters on deck, and her ninety sick below;
For half of their fleet to the right and half to the left were seen,
And the little Revenge ran on thro' the long sea-lane between.

vi.

Thousands of their soldiers look'd down from their decks and laugh'd,
Thousands of their seamen made mock at the mad little craft

Running on and on, till delay'd
By their mountain-like San Philip that, of fifteen hundred tons,
And up-shadowing high above us with her yawning tiers of guns,
Took the breath from our sails, and we stay'd.

VII.

And while now the great San Philip hung above us like a cloud
Whence the thunderbolt will fall
Long and loud,
Four galleons drew away
From the Spanish fleet that day,
And two upon the larboard and two upon the starboard lay,
And the battle-thunder broke from them all.

VIII.

But anon the great San Philip, she bethought herself and went

Having that within her womb that had left her ill content;

And the rest they came aboard us, and they fought us hand to hand,

For a dozen times they came with their pikes and musqueteers,

And a dozen times we shook 'em off as a dog that shakes his ears

When he leaps from the water to the land.

IX.

And the sun went down, and the stars came out far over the summer sea,

But never a moment ceased the fight of the one and the fifty-three.

Ship after ship, the whole night long, their high-built galleons came,

Ship after ship, the whole night long, with her battle-thunder and flame;

Ship after ship, the whole night long, drew back with her dead and her shame.

For some were sunk and many were shatter'd, and so
could fight us no more—
God of battles, was ever a battle like this in the
world before?

x.

For he said 'Fight on! fight on!'
Tho' his vessel was all but a wreck;
And it chanced that, when half of the short summer
night was gone,
With a grisly wound to be drest he had left the deck,
But a bullet struck him that was dressing it suddenly
dead,
And himself he was wounded again in the side and
the head,
And he said 'Fight on! fight on!'

xi.

And the night went down, and the sun smiled out far
over the summer sea,

And the Spanish fleet with broken sides lay round us
all in a ring;
But they dared not touch us again, for they fear'd that
we still could sting,
So they watch'd what the end would be.
And we had not fought them in vain,
But in perilous plight were we,
Seeing forty of our poor hundred were slain,
And half of the rest of us maim'd for life
In the crash of the cannonades and the desperate
strife;
And the sick men down in the hold were most of them
stark and cold,
And the pikes were all broken or bent, and the powder
was all of it spent;
And the masts and the rigging were lying over the
side;
But Sir Richard cried in his English pride,
'We have fought such a fight for a day and a night
As may never be fought again!
We have won great glory, my men!

And a day less or more
At sea or ashore,
We die—does it matter when?
Sink me the ship, Master Gunner—sink her, split her in twain!
Fall into the hands of God, not into the hands of Spain!'

XII.

And the gunner said 'Ay, ay,' but the seamen made reply:
'We have children, we have wives,
And the Lord hath spared our lives.
We will make the Spaniard promise, if we yield, to let us go;
We shall live to fight again and to strike another blow.'
And the lion there lay dying, and they yielded to the foe.

XIII.

And the stately Spanish men to their flagship bore him then,

Where they laid him by the mast, old Sir Richard caught at last,
And they praised him to his face with their courtly foreign grace;
But he rose upon their decks, and he cried:
'I have fought for Queen and Faith like a valiant man and true;
I have only done my duty as a man is bound to do:
With a joyful spirit I Sir Richard Grenville die!'
And he fell upon their decks, and he died.

XIV.

And they stared at the dead that had been so valiant and true,
And had holden the power and glory of Spain so cheap
That he dared her with one little ship and his English few;
Was he devil or man? He was devil for aught they knew,

But they sank his body with honour down into the deep,
And they mann'd the Revenge with a swarthier alien crew,
And away she sail'd with her loss and long'd for her own;
When a wind from the lands they had ruin'd awoke from sleep,
And the water began to heave and the weather to moan,
And or ever that evening ended a great gale blew,
And a wave like the wave that is raised by an earthquake grew,
Till it smote on their hulls and their sails and their masts and their flags,
And the whole sea plunged and fell on the shot-shatter'd navy of Spain,
And the little Revenge herself went down by the island crags
To be lost evermore in the main.

THE SISTERS.

They have left the doors ajar; and by their clash,
And prelude on the keys, I know the song,
Their favourite—which I call 'The Tables Turned.'
Evelyn begins it 'O diviner Air.'

EVELYN.

O diviner Air,
Thro' the heat, the drowth, the dust, the glare,
Far from out the west in shadowing showers,
Over all the meadow baked and bare,
Making fresh and fair
All the bowers and the flowers,
Fainting flowers, faded bowers,
Over all this weary world of ours,
Breathe, diviner Air!

A sweet voice that—you scarce could better that.
Now follows Edith echoing Evelyn.

EDITH.

O diviner light,
Thro' the cloud that roofs our noon with night,
Thro' the blotting mist, the blinding showers,
Far from out a sky for ever bright,
Over all the woodland's flooded bowers,
Over all the meadow's drowning flowers,
Over all this ruin'd world of ours,
Break, diviner light!

Marvellously like, their voices—and themselves!
Tho' one is somewhat deeper than the other,
As one is somewhat graver than the other—
Edith than Evelyn. Your good Uncle, whom
You count the father of your fortune, longs
For this alliance: let me ask you then,
Which voice most takes you? for I do not doubt
Being a watchful parent, you are taken

With one or other: tho' sometimes I fear
You may be flickering, fluttering in a doubt
Between the two—which must not be—which might
Be death to one: they both are beautiful:
Evelyn is gayer, wittier, prettier, says
The common voice, if one may trust it: she?
No! but the paler and the graver, Edith.
Woo her and gain her then: no wavering, boy!
The graver is perhaps the one for you
Who jest and laugh so easily and so well.
For love will go by contrast, as by likes.

No sisters ever prized each other more.
Not so: their mother and her sister loved
More passionately still.

But that my best
And oldest friend, your Uncle, wishes it,
And that I know you worthy everyway
To be my son, I might, perchance, be loath
To part them, or part from them: and yet one
Should marry, or all the broad lands in your view

From this bay window—which our house has held
Three hundred years—will pass collaterally.

My father with a child on either knee,
A hand upon the head of either child,
Smoothing their locks, as golden as his own
Were silver, 'get them wedded' would he say.
And once my prattling Edith ask'd him 'why?'
Ay, why? said he, 'for why should I go lame?'
Then told them of his wars, and of his wound.
For see—this wine—the grape from whence it flow'd
Was blackening on the slopes of Portugal,
When that brave soldier, down the terrible ridge
Plunged in the last fierce charge at Waterloo,
And caught the laming bullet. He left me this,
Which yet retains a memory of its youth,
As I of mine, and my first passion. Come!
Here's to your happy union with my child!

Yet must you change your name: no fault of mine!
You say that you can do it as willingly
As birds make ready for their bridal-time

By change of feather: for all that, my boy,
Some birds are sick and sullen when they moult.
An old and worthy name! but mine that stirr'd
Among our civil wars and earlier too
Among the Roses, the more venerable.
I care not for a name—no fault of mine.
Once more—a happier marriage than my own!

You see yon Lombard poplar on the plain.
The highway running by it leaves a breadth
Of sward to left and right, where, long ago,
One bright May morning in a world of song,
I lay at leisure, watching overhead
The aërial poplar wave, an amber spire.

I dozed; I woke. An open landaulet
Whirl'd by, which, after it had past me, show'd
Turning my way, the loveliest face on earth.
The face of one there sitting opposite,
On whom I brought a strange unhappiness,
That time I did not see.

Love at first sight
May seem—with goodly rhyme and reason for it—
Possible—at first glimpse, and for a face
Gone in a moment—strange. Yet once, when first
I came on lake Llanberris in the dark,
A moonless night with storm—one lightning-fork
Flash'd out the lake; and tho' I loiter'd there
The full day after, yet in retrospect
That less than momentary thunder-sketch
Of lake and mountain conquers all the day.

The Sun himself has limn'd the face for me.
Not quite so quickly, no, nor half as well.
For look you here—the shadows are too deep,
And like the critic's blurring comment make
The veriest beauties of the work appear
The darkest faults: the sweet eyes frown: the lips
Seem but a gash. My sole memorial
Of Edith—no, the other,—both indeed.

So that bright face was flash'd thro' sense and soul
And by the poplar vanish'd—to be found

Long after, as it seem'd, beneath the tall
Tree-bowers, and those long-sweeping beechen boughs
Of our New Forest. I was there alone:
The phantom of the whirling landaulet
For ever past me by: when one quick peal
Of laughter drew me thro' the glimmering glades
Down to the snowlike sparkle of a cloth
On fern and foxglove. Lo, the face again,
My Rosalind in this Arden—Edith—all
One bloom of youth, health, beauty, happiness,
And moved to merriment at a passing jest.

There one of those about her knowing me
Call'd me to join them; so with these I spent
What seem'd my crowning hour, my day of days.

I woo'd her then, nor unsuccessfully,
The worse for her, for me! was I content?
Ay—no, not quite; for now and then I thought
Laziness, vague love-longings, the bright May,
Had made a heated haze to magnify

The charm of Edith—that a man's ideal
Is high in Heaven, and lodged with Plato's God,
Not findable here—content, and not content,
In some such fashion as a man may be
That having had the portrait of his friend
Drawn by an artist, looks at it, and says,
'Good! very like! not altogether he.'

As yet I had not bound myself by words,
Only, believing I loved Edith, made
Edith love *me*. Then came the day when I,
Flattering myself that all my doubts were fools
Born of the fool this Age that doubts of all—
Not I that day of Edith's love or mine—
Had braced my purpose to declare myself:
I stood upon the stairs of Paradise.
The golden gates would open at a word.
I spoke it—told her of my passion, seen
And lost and found again, had got so far,
Had caught her hand, her eyelids fell—I heard
Wheels, and a noise of welcome at the doors—

On a sudden after two Italian years
Had set the blossom of her health again,
The younger sister, Evelyn, enter'd—there,
There was the face, and altogether she.
The mother fell about the daughter's neck,
The sisters closed in one another's arms,
Their people throng'd about them from the hall,
And in the thick of question and reply
I fled the house, driven by one angel face,
And all the Furies.

I was bound to her;
I could not free myself in honour—bound
Not by the sounded letter of the word,
But counterpressures of the yielded hand
That timorously and faintly echoed mine,
Quick blushes, the sweet dwelling of her eyes
Upon me when she thought I did not see—
Were these not bonds? nay, nay, but could I wed her
Loving the other? do her that great wrong?
Had I not dream'd I loved her yestermorn?

Had I not known where Love, at first a fear,
Grew after marriage to full height and form?
Yet after marriage, that mock-sister there—
Brother-in-law—the fiery nearness of it—
Unlawful and disloyal brotherhood—
What end but darkness could ensue from this
For all the three? So Love and Honour jarr'd
Tho' Love and Honour join'd to raise the full
High-tide of doubt that sway'd me up and down
Advancing nor retreating.

Edith wrote:

'My mother bids me ask' (I did not tell you—
A widow with less guile than many a child.
God help the wrinkled children that are Christ's
As well as the plump cheek—she wrought us harm,
Poor soul, not knowing) 'are you ill?' (so ran
The letter) 'you have not been here of late.
You will not find me here. At last I go
On that long-promised visit to the North.
I told your wayside story to my mother

And Evelyn. She remembers you. Farewell.
Pray come and see my mother. Almost blind
With ever-growing cataract, yet she thinks
She sees you when she hears. Again farewell.'

Cold words from one I had hoped to warm so far
That I could stamp my image on her heart!
'Pray come and see my mother, and farewell.'
Cold, but as welcome as free airs of heaven
After a dungeon's closeness. Selfish, strange!
What dwarfs are men! my strangled vanity
Utter'd a stifled cry—to have vext myself
And all in vain for her—cold heart or none—
No bride for me. Yet so my path was clear
To win the sister.

Whom I woo'd and won.

For Evelyn knew not of my former suit,
Because the simple mother work'd upon
By Edith pray'd me not to whisper of it.
And Edith would be bridesmaid on the day.

But on that day, not being all at ease,

I from the altar glancing back upon her,
Before the first 'I will' was utter'd, saw
The bridesmaid pale, statuelike, passionless—
'No harm, no harm' I turn'd again, and placed
My ring upon the finger of my bride.

So, when we parted, Edith spoke no word,
She wept no tear, but round my Evelyn clung
In utter silence for so long, I thought
'What, will she never set her sister free?'

We left her, happy each in each, and then,
As tho' the happiness of each in each
Were not enough, must fain have torrents, lakes,
Hills, the great things of Nature and the fair,
To lift us as it were from commonplace,
And help us to our joy. Better have sent
Our Edith thro' the glories of the earth,
To change with her horizon, if true Love
Were not his own imperial all-in-all.

Far off we went. My God, I would not live
Save that I think this gross hard-seeming world
Is our misshaping vision of the Powers
Behind the world, that make our griefs our gains.

For on the dark night of our marriage-day
The great Tragedian, that had quench'd herself
In that assumption of the bridesmaid—she
That loved me—our true Edith—her brain broke
With over-acting, till she rose and fled
Beneath a pitiless rush of Autumn rain
To the deaf church—to be let in—to pray
Before *that* altar—so I think; and there
They found her beating the hard Protestant doors.
She died and she was buried ere we knew.

I learnt it first. I had to speak. At once
The bright quick smile of Evelyn, that had sunn'd
The morning of our marriage, past away:
And on our home-return the daily want
Of Edith in the house, the garden, still

Haunted us like her ghost; and by and by,
Either from that necessity for talk
Which lives with blindness, or plain innocence
Of nature, or desire that her lost child
Should earn from both the praise of heroism,
The mother broke her promise to the dead,
And told the living daughter with what love
Edith had welcomed my brief wooing of her,
And all her sweet self-sacrifice and death.

Henceforth that mystic bond betwixt the twins—
Did I not tell you they were twins?—prevail'd
So far that no caress could win my wife
Back to that passionate answer of full heart
I had from her at first. Not that her love,
Tho' scarce as great as Edith's power of love,
Had lessen'd, but the mother's garrulous wail
For ever woke the unhappy Past again,
Till that dead bridesmaid, meant to be my bride,
Put forth cold hands between us, and I fear'd
The very fountains of her life were chill'd;

So took her thence, and brought her here, and here
She bore a child, whom reverently we call'd
Edith; and in the second year was born
A second—this I named from her own self,
Evelyn; then two weeks—no more—she join'd,
In and beyond the grave, that one she loved.
Now in this quiet of declining life,
Thro' dreams by night and trances of the day,
The sisters glide about me hand in hand,
Both beautiful alike, nor can I tell
One from the other, no, nor care to tell
One from the other, only know they come,
They smile upon me, till, remembering all
The love they both have borne me, and the love
I bore them both—divided as I am
From either by the stillness of the grave—
I know not which of these I love the best.

But *you* love Edith; and her own true eyes
Are traitors to her; our quick Evelyn—
The merrier, prettier, wittier, as they talk,

And not without good reason, my good son—
Is yet untouch'd: and I that hold them both
Dearest of all things—well, I am not sure—
But if there lie a preference eitherway,
And in the rich vocabulary of Love
'Most dearest' be a true superlative—
I think *I* likewise love your Edith most.

THE VILLAGE WIFE; OR, THE ENTAIL.[1]

I.

'OUSE-KEEPER sent tha my lass, fur New Squire coom'd
last night.
Butter an' heggs—yis—yis. I'll goä wi' tha back:
all right;
Butter I warrants be prime, an' I warrants the heggs
be as well,
Hafe a pint o' milk runs out when ya breäks the shell.

II.

Sit thysen down fur a bit: hev a glass o' cowslip
wine!
I liked the owd Squire an' 'is gells as thaw they was
gells o' mine,

[1] See note to 'Northern Cobbler.'

Fur then we was all es one, the Squire an' 'is darters an' me,
Hall but Miss Annie, the heldest, I niver not took to she:
But Nelly, the last of the cletch,[1] I liked 'er the fust on 'em all,
Fur hoffens we talkt o' my darter es died o' the fever at fall:
An' I thowt 'twur the will o' the Lord, but Miss Annie she said it wur draäins,
Fur she hedn't naw coomfut in 'er, an' arn'd naw thanks fur 'er paäins.
Eh! thebbe all wi' the Lord my childer, I han't gotten none!
Sa new Squire's coom'd wi' 'is taäil in 'is 'and, an' owd Squire's gone.

III.

Fur 'staäte be i' taäil, my lass: tha dosn' knaw what that be?

[1] A brood of chickens.

But I knaws the law, I does, for the lawyer ha towd
it me.
'When theer's naw 'eäd to a 'Ouse by the fault o' that
ere maäle—
The gells they counts fur nowt, and the next un he
taäkes the taäil.'

IV.

What be the next un like? can tha tell ony harm on
'im lass?—
Naay sit down—naw 'urry—sa cowd!—hev another
glass!
Straänge an' cowd fur the time! we may happen a
fall o' snaw—
Not es I cares fur to hear ony harm, but I likes to
knaw.
An' I 'oäps es 'e beänt booooklarn'd: but 'e dosn' not
coom fro' the shere;
We'd anew o' that wi' the Squire, an' we haätes boook-
larnin' ere.

v.

Fur Squire wur a Varsity scholard, an' niver lookt arter the land—
Whoäts or tonups or taätes—'e 'ed hallus a booök i' 'is 'and,
Hallus aloän wi' 'is booöks, thaw nigh upo' seventy year.
An' booöks, what's booöks? thou knaws thebbe naither 'ere nor theer.

vi.

An' the gells, they hedn't naw taäils, an' the lawyer he towd it me
That 'is taäil were soä tied up es he couldn't cut down a tree!
'Drat the trees,' says I, to be sewer I haätes 'em, my lass,
Fur we puts the muck o' the land an' they sucks the muck fro' the grass.

VII.

An' Squire wur hallus a-smilin', an' gied to the tramps goin' by—

An' all o' the wust i' the parish—wi' hoffens a drop in 'is eye.

An' ivry darter o' Squire's hed her awn ridin-erse to 'ersen,

An' they rampaged about wi' their grooms, an' was 'untin' arter the men,

An' hallus a-dallackt[1] an' dizen'd out, an' a-buyin' new cloäthes,

While 'e sit like a greät glimmer-gowk[2] wi' 'is glasses athurt 'is noäse,

An' 'is noäse sa grufted wi' snuff es it couldn't be scroob'd awaäy,

Fur atween 'is readin' an' writin' 'e snifft up a box in a daäy,

An' 'e niver runn'd arter the fox, nor arter the birds wi' 'is gun,

[1] Overdrest in gay colours. [2] Owl.

An' 'e niver not shot one 'are, but 'e leäved it to Charlie 'is son,

An' 'e niver not fish'd 'is awn ponds, but Charlie 'e cotch'd the pike,

For 'e warn't not burn to the land, an' 'e didn't take kind to it like;

But I eärs es 'e'd gie fur a howry[1] owd book thutty pound an' moor,

An' 'e'd wrote an owd book, his awn sen, sa I knaw'd es 'e'd coom to be poor;

An' 'e gied—I be fear'd fur to tell tha 'ow much—fur an owd scratted stoän,

An' 'e digg'd up a loomp i' the land an' 'e got a brown pot an' a boän,

An' 'e bowt owd money, es wouldn't goä, wi' good gowd o' the Queen,

An' 'e bowt little statutes all-naäkt an' which was a shaame to be seen;

But 'e niver looökt ower a bill, nor 'e niver not seed to owt,

[1] Filthy.

An' 'e niver knawd nowt but booöks, an' booöks, as thou knaws, beänt nowt.

VIII.

But owd Squire's laädy es long es she lived she kept 'em all clear,

Thaw es long es she lived I niver hed none of 'er darters 'ere;

But arter she died we was all es one, the childer an' me,

An' sarvints runn'd in an' out, an' offens we hed 'em to tea.

Lawk! 'ow I laugh'd when the lasses 'ud talk o' their Missis's waäys,

An' the Missisis talk'd o' the lasses.—I'll tell tha some o' these daäys.

Hoänly Miss Annie were saw stuck oop, like 'er mother afoor—

'Er an' 'er blessed darter—they niver derken'd my door.

IX.

An' Squire 'e smiled an' 'e smiled till 'e'd gotten a fright at last,
An' 'e calls fur 'is son, fur the 'turney's letters they foller'd sa fast;
But Squire wur afear'd o' 'is son, an' 'e says to 'im, meek as a mouse,
'Lad, thou mun cut off thy taäil, or the gells 'ull goä to the 'Ouse,
Fur I finds es I be that i' debt, es I 'oäps es thou'll 'elp me a bit,
An' if thou'll 'gree to cut off thy taäil I may saäve mysen yit.'

X.

But Charlie 'e sets back 'is ears, an' 'e sweärs, an' 'e says to 'im 'Noa.
I've gotten the 'staäte by the taäil an' be dang'd if I iver let goa!

Coom! coom! feyther,' 'e says, 'why shouldn't thy booöks be sowd?
I hears es soom o' thy booöks mebbe worth their weight i' gowd.'

XI.

Heäps an' heäps o' booöks, I ha' see'd 'em, belong'd to the Squire,
But the lasses 'ed teärd out leäves i' the middle to kindle the fire;
Sa moäst on 'is owd big booöks fetch'd nigh to nowt at the saäle,
And Squire were at Charlie ageän to git 'im to cut off 'is taäil.

XII.

Ya wouldn't find Charlie's likes—'e were that outdacious at 'oäm,
Not thaw ya went fur to raäke out Hell wi' a small-tooth coämb—

Droonk wi' the Quoloty's wine, an' droonk wi' the
farmer's aäle,
Mad wi' the lasses an' all—an' 'e wouldn't cut off
the taäil.

XIII.

Thou's coom'd oop by the beck; and a thurn be
a-grawin' theer,
I niver ha seed it sa white wi' the Maäy es I see'd it
to-year—
Theerabouts Charlie joompt—and it gied me a scare
tother night,
Fur I thowt it wur Charlie's ghoäst i' the derk, fur it
looökt sa white.
'Billy,' says 'e, 'hev a joomp!'—thaw the banks o'
the beck be sa high,
Fur he ca'd 'is 'erse Billy-rough-un, thaw niver a hair
wur awry;
But Billy fell bakkuds o' Charlie, an' Charlie 'e brok
'is neck,

Sa theer wur a hend o' the taäil, fur 'e lost 'is taäil i' the beck.

XIV.

Sa 'is taäil wur lost an' 'is booöks wur gone an' 'is boy wur deäd,

An' Squire 'e smiled an' 'e smiled, but 'e niver not lift oop 'is 'eäd:

Hallus a soft un Squire! an' 'e smiled, fur 'e hedn't naw friend,

Sa feyther an' son was buried togither, an' this wur the hend.

XV.

An' Parson as hesn't the call, nor the mooney, but hes the pride,

'E reäds of a sewer an' sartan 'oäp o' the tother side;

But I beänt that sewer es the Lord, howsiver they praäy'd, an' praäy'd,

Lets them inter 'eaven eäsy es leäves their debts to be paäid.

Siver the mou'ds rattled down upo' poor owd Squire
i' the wood,
An' I cried along wi' the gells, fur they weänt niver
coom to naw good.

XVI.

Fur Molly the long un she walkt awaäy wi' a hofficer
lad,
An' nawbody 'eärd on 'er sin, sa o' coorse she be gone
to the bad!
An' Lucy wur laäme o' one leg, sweet'arts she niver
'ed none—
Straänge an' unheppen[1] Miss Lucy! we naämed her
'Dot an' gaw one!'
An' Hetty wur weak i' the hattics, wi'out ony harm i'
the legs,
An' the fever 'ed baäked Jinny's 'eäd as bald as one
o' them heggs,
An' Nelly wur up fro' the craädle as big i' the mouth
as a cow,

[1] Ungainly, awkward.

An' saw she mun hammergrate,[1] lass, or she weänt git
a maäte onyhow!
An' es for Miss Annie es call'd me afoor my awn
foälks to my faäce
'A hignorant village wife as 'ud hev to be larn'd her
awn plaäce,'
Hes fur Miss Hannie the heldest hes now be a-grawin'
sa howd,
I knaws that mooch o' sheä, es it beänt not fit to be
towd!

XVII.

Sa I didn't not taäke it kindly ov owd Miss Annie to
saäy
Es I should be talkin ageän 'em, es soon es they went
awaäy,
Fur, lawks! 'ow I cried when they went, an' our
Nelly she gied me 'er 'and,
Fur I'd ha done owt for the Squire an' 'is gells es be-
long'd to the land;

[1] Emigrate.

Booöks, es I said afoor, thebbe neyther 'ere nor theer!
But I sarved 'em wi' butter an' heggs fur huppuds o'
twenty year.

XVIII.

An' they hallus paäid what I hax'd, sa I hallus deal'd
wi' the Hall,
An' they knaw'd what butter wur, an' they knaw'd
what a hegg wur an' all;
Hugger-mugger they lived, but they wasn't that eäsy
to pleäse,
Till I gied 'em Hinjian curn, an' they laäid big heggs
es tha seeas;
An' I niver puts saäme[1] i' *my* butter, they does it at
Willis's farm,
Taäste another drop o' the wine—tweänt do tha naw
harm.

XIX.

Sa new Squire's coom'd wi' 'is taäil in 'is 'and, an'
owd Squire's gone;

[1] Lard.

I heard 'im a roomlin' by, but arter my nightcap wur on;

Sa I han't clapt eyes on 'im yit, fur he coom'd last night sa laäte—

Pluksh! ! ![1] the hens i' the peäs! why didn't tha hesp the gaäte?

[1] A cry accompanied by a clapping of hands to scare trespassing fowl.

IN THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL.

EMMIE.

I.

Our doctor had call'd in another, I never had seen
him before,
But he sent a chill to my heart when I saw him come
in at the door,
Fresh from the surgery-schools of France and of other
lands—
Harsh red hair, big voice, big chest, big merciless
hands!
Wonderful cures he had done, O yes, but they said
too of him
He was happier using the knife than in trying to save
the limb,

And that I can well believe, for he look'd so coarse
and so red,
I could think he was one of those who would break
their jests on the dead,
And mangle the living dog that had loved him and
fawn'd at his knee—
Drench'd with the hellish oorali—that ever such
things should be!

II.

Here was a boy—I am sure that some of our children
would die
But for the voice of Love, and the smile, and the
comforting eye—
Here was a boy in the ward, every bone seem'd out
of its place—
Caught in a mill and crush'd—it was all but a hope-
less case:
And he handled him gently enough; but his voice
and his face were not kind,

And it was but a hopeless case, he had seen it and made up his mind,

And he said to me roughly 'The lad will need little more of your care.'

'All the more need,' I told him, 'to seek the Lord Jesus in prayer;

They are all his children here, and I pray for them all as my own:'

But he turn'd to me, 'Ay, good woman, can prayer set a broken bone?'

Then he mutter'd half to himself, but I know that I heard him say

'All very well—but the good Lord Jesus has had his day.'

III.

Had? has it come? It has only dawn'd. It will come by and by.

O how could I serve in the wards if the hope of the world were a lie?

How could I bear with the sights and the loathsome
smells of disease
But that He said 'Ye do it to me, when ye do it to
these'?

IV.

So he went. And we past to this ward where the
younger children are laid:
Here is the cot of our orphan, our darling, our meek
little maid;
Empty you see just now! We have lost her who loved
her so much—
Patient of pain tho' as quick as a sensitive plant to
the touch;
Hers was the prettiest prattle, it often moved me to
tears,
Hers was the gratefullest heart I have found in a child
of her years—
Nay you remember our Emmie; you used to send her
the flowers;

How she would smile at 'em, play with 'em, talk to 'em hours after hours!

They that can wander at will where the works of the Lord are reveal'd

Little guess what joy can be got from a cowslip out of the field;

Flowers to these 'spirits in prison' are all they can know of the spring,

They freshen and sweeten the wards like the waft of an Angel's wing;

And she lay with a flower in one hand and her thin hands crost on her breast—

Wan, but as pretty as heart can desire, and we thought her at rest,

Quietly sleeping—so quiet, our doctor said 'Poor little dear,

Nurse, I must do it to-morrow; she'll never live thro' it, I fear.'

v.

I walk'd with our kindly old doctor as far as the head of the stair,

Then I return'd to the ward; the child didn't see I was there.

vi.

Never since I was nurse, had I been so grieved and so vext!

Emmie had heard him. Softly she call'd from her cot to the next,

'He says I shall never live thro' it, O Annie, what shall I do?'

Annie consider'd. 'If I,' said the wise little Annie, 'was you,

I should cry to the dear Lord Jesus to help me, for, Emmie, you see,

It's all in the picture there: "Little children should come to me."'

(Meaning the print that you gave us, I find that it always can please

Our children, the dear Lord Jesus with children about
his knees.)
'Yes, and I will,' said Emmie, 'but then if I call to
the Lord,
How should he know that it's me? such a lot of beds
in the ward!'
That was a puzzle for Annie. Again she consider'd
and said:
'Emmie, you put out your arms, and you leave 'em
outside on the bed—
The Lord has so *much* to see to! but, Emmie, you tell
it him plain,
It's the little girl with her arms lying out on the coun-
terpane.'

VII.

I had sat three nights by the child—I could not watch
her for four—
My brain had begun to reel—I felt I could do it no
more.

That was my sleeping-night, but I thought that it never would pass.

There was a thunderclap once, and a clatter of hail on the glass,

And there was a phantom cry that I heard as I tost about,

The motherless bleat of a lamb in the storm and the darkness without;

My sleep was broken besides with dreams of the dreadful knife

And fears for our delicate Emmie who scarce would escape with her life;

Then in the gray of the morning it seem'd she stood by me and smiled,

And the doctor came at his hour, and we went to see to the child.

VIII.

He had brought his ghastly tools: we believed her asleep again—

Her dear, long, lean, little arms lying out on the
counterpane;
Say that His day is done! Ah why should we care
what they say?
The Lord of the children had heard her, and Emmie
had past away.

DEDICATORY POEM TO THE PRINCESS ALICE.

Dead Princess, living Power, if that, which lived
True life, live on—and if the fatal kiss,
Born of true life and love, divorce thee not
From earthly love and life—if what we call
The spirit flash not all at once from out
This shadow into Substance—then perhaps
The mellow'd murmur of the people's praise
From thine own State, and all our breadth of realm,
Where Love and Longing dress thy deeds in light,
Ascends to thee; and this March morn that sees
Thy Soldier-brother's bridal orange-bloom
Break thro' the yews and cypress of thy grave,
And thine Imperial mother smile again,
May send one ray to thee! and who can tell—

Thou—England's England-loving daughter—thou
Dying so English thou wouldst have her flag
Borne on thy coffin—where is he can swear
But that some broken gleam from our poor earth
May touch thee, while remembering thee, I lay
At thy pale feet this ballad of the deeds
Of England, and her banner in the East?

THE DEFENCE OF LUCKNOW.

I.

Banner of England, not for a season, O banner of Britain, hast thou
Floated in conquering battle or flapt to the battle-cry!
Never with mightier glory than when we had rear'd thee on high
Flying at top of the roofs in the ghastly siege of Lucknow—
Shot thro' the staff or the halyard, but ever we raised thee anew,
And ever upon the topmost roof our banner of England blew.

II.

Frail were the works that defended the hold that we held with our lives—

Women and children among us, God help them, our children and wives!

Hold it we might—and for fifteen days or for twenty at most.

'Never surrender, I charge you, but every man die at his post!'

Voice of the dead whom we loved, our Lawrence the best of the brave:

Cold were his brows when we kiss'd him—we laid him that night in his grave.

'Every man die at his post!' and there hail'd on our houses and halls

Death from their rifle-bullets, and death from their cannon-balls,

Death in our innermost chamber, and death at our slight barricade,

Death while we stood with the musket, and death while we stoopt to the spade,

Death to the dying, and wounds to the wounded, for often there fell,

Striking the hospital wall, crashing thro' it, their shot and their shell,

Death—for their spies were among us, their marksmen were told of our best,

So that the brute bullet broke thro' the brain that could think for the rest;

Bullets would sing by our foreheads, and bullets would rain at our feet—

Fire from ten thousand at once of the rebels that girdled us round—

Death at the glimpse of a finger from over the breadth of a street,

Death from the heights of the mosque and the palace, and death in the ground!

Mine? yes, a mine! Countermine! down, down! and creep thro' the hole!

Keep the revolver in hand! you can hear him—the murderous mole!

Quiet, ah! quiet—wait till the point of the pickaxe be thro'!

Click with the pick, coming nearer and nearer again than before—

Now let it speak, and you fire, and the dark pioneer is no more;

And ever upon the topmost roof our banner of England blew!

III.

Ay, but the foe sprung his mine many times, and it chanced on a day

Soon as the blast of that underground thunderclap echo'd away,

Dark thro' the smoke and the sulphur like so many fiends in their hell—

Cannon-shot, musket-shot, volley on volley, and yell upon yell—

Fiercely on all the defences our myriad enemy fell.
What have they done? where is it? Out yonder. Guard the Redan!
Storm at the Water-gate! storm at the Bailey-gate! storm, and it ran
Surging and swaying all round us, as ocean on every side
Plunges and heaves at a bank that is daily devour'd by the tide—
So many thousands that if they be bold enough, who shall escape?
Kill or be kill'd, live or die, they shall know we are soldiers and men!
Ready! take aim at their leaders—their masses are gapp'd with our grape—
Backward they reel like the wave, like the wave flinging forward again,
Flying and foil'd at the last by the handful they could not subdue;
And ever upon the topmost roof our banner of England blew.

IV.

Handful of men as we were, we were English in heart and in limb,
Strong with the strength of the race to command, to obey, to endure,
Each of us fought as if hope for the garrison hung but on him;
Still—could we watch at all points? we were every day fewer and fewer.
There was a whisper among us, but only a whisper that past:
'Children and wives—if the tigers leap into the fold unawares—
Every man die at his post—and the foe may outlive us at last—
Better to fall by the hands that they love, than to fall into theirs!'
Roar upon roar in a moment two mines by the enemy sprung

Clove into perilous chasms our walls and our poor palisades.

Rifleman, true is your heart, but be sure that your hand be as true!

Sharp is the fire of assault, better aimed are your flank fusillades—

Twice do we hurl them to earth from the ladders to which they had clung,

Twice from the ditch where they shelter we drive them with hand-grenades;

And ever upon the topmost roof our banner of England blew.

v.

Then on another wild morning another wild earthquake out-tore

Clean from our lines of defence ten or twelve good paces or more.

Rifleman, high on the roof, hidden there from the light of the sun—

One has leapt up on the breach, crying out: 'Follow me, follow me!'—

Mark him—he falls! then another, and *him* too, and down goes he.

Had they been bold enough then, who can tell but the traitors had won?

Boardings and rafters and doors—an embrasure! make way for the gun!

Now double-charge it with grape! It is charged and we fire, and they run.

Praise to our Indian brothers, and let the dark face have his due!

Thanks to the kindly dark faces who fought with us, faithful and few,

Fought with the bravest among us, and drove them, and smote them, and slew,

That ever upon the topmost roof our banner in India blew.

VI.

Men will forget what we suffer and not what we do. We can fight!

But to be soldier all day and be sentinel all thro' the night—

Ever the mine and assault, our sallies, their lying alarms,

Bugles and drums in the darkness, and shoutings and soundings to arms,

Ever the labour of fifty that had to be done by five,

Ever the marvel among us that one should be left alive,

Ever the day with its traitorous death from the loop-holes around,

Ever the night with its coffinless corpse to be laid in the ground,

Heat like the mouth of a hell, or a deluge of cataract skies,

Stench of old offal decaying, and infinite torment of flies,

Thoughts of the breezes of May blowing over an English field,

Cholera, scurvy, and fever, the wound that *would* not be heal'd,

Lopping away of the limb by the pitiful-pitiless knife,—

Torture and trouble in vain,—for it never could save
us a life.
Valour of delicate women who tended the hospital bed,
Horror of women in travail among the dying and
dead,
Grief for our perishing children, and never a moment
for grief,
Toil and ineffable weariness, faltering hopes of relief,
Havelock baffled, or beaten, or butcher'd for all that
we knew—
Then day and night, day and night, coming down on
the still-shatter'd walls
Millions of musket-bullets, and thousands of cannon
balls—
But ever upon the topmost roof our banner of Eng-
land blew.

VII.

Hark cannonade, fusillade! is it true what was told
by the scout,

Outram and Havelock breaking their way through the fell mutineers?

Surely the pibroch of Europe is ringing again in our ears!

All on a sudden the garrison utter a jubilant shout,

Havelock's glorious Highlanders answer with conquering cheers,

Sick from the hospital echo them, women and children come out,

Blessing the wholesome white faces of Havelock's good fusileers,

Kissing the war-harden'd hand of the Highlander wet with their tears!

Dance to the pibroch!—saved! we are saved!—is it you? is it you?

Saved by the valour of Havelock, saved by the blessing of Heaven!

'Hold it for fifteen days!' we have held it for eighty-seven!

And ever aloft on the palace roof the old banner of England blew.

SIR JOHN OLDCASTLE, LORD COBHAM.

(IN WALES.)

My friend should meet me somewhere hereabout
To take me to that hiding in the hills.

I have broke their cage, no gilded one, I trow—
I read no more the prisoner's mute wail
Scribbled or carved upon the pitiless stone;
I find hard rocks, hard life, hard cheer, or none,
For I am emptier than a friar's brains;
But God is with me in this wilderness,
These wet black passes and foam-churning chasms—
And God's free air, and hope of better things.

I would I knew their speech; not now to glean,
Not now—I hope to do it—some scatter'd ears,

Some ears for Christ in this wild field of Wales—
But, bread, merely for bread. This tongue that wagg'd
They said with such heretical arrogance
Against the proud archbishop Arundel—
So much God's cause was fluent in it—is here
But as a Latin Bible to the crowd;
'Bara!'—what use? The Shepherd, when I speak,
Vailing a sudden eyelid with his hard
'Dim Saesneg' passes, wroth at things of old—
No fault of mine. Had he God's word in Welsh
He might be kindlier: happily come the day!

Not least art thou, thou little Bethlehem
In Judah, for in thee the Lord was born;
Nor thou in Britain, little Lutterworth,
Least, for in thee the word was born again.

Heaven-sweet Evangel, ever-living word,
Who whilome spakest to the South in Greek
About the soft Mediterranean shores,

And then in Latin to the Latin crowd,
As good need was—thou hast come to talk our isle.
Hereafter thou, fulfilling Pentecost,
Must learn to use the tongues of all the world.
Yet art thou thine own witness that thou bringest
Not peace, a sword, a fire.
What did he say,
My frighted Wiclif-preacher whom I crost
In flying hither? that one night a crowd
Throng'd the waste field about the city gates:
The king was on them suddenly with a host.
Why there? they came to hear their preacher. Then
Some cried on Cobham, on the good Lord Cobham;
Ay, for they love me! but the king—nor voice
Nor finger raised against him—took and hang'd,
Took, hang'd and burnt—how many—thirty-nine—
Call'd it rebellion—hang'd, poor friends, as rebels
And burn'd alive as heretics! for your Priest
Labels—to take the king along with him—
All heresy, treason: but to call men traitors
May make men traitors.

Rose of Lancaster,
Red in thy birth, redder with household war,
Now reddest with the blood of holy men,
Redder to be, red rose of Lancaster—
If somewhere in the North, as Rumour sang
Fluttering the hawks of this crown-lusting line—
By firth and loch thy silver sister grow,[1]
That were my rose, there my allegiance due.
Self-starved, they say—nay, murder'd, doubtless dead.
So to this king I cleaved: my friend was he,
Once my fast friend: I would have given my life
To help his own from scathe, a thousand lives
To save his soul. He might have come to learn
Our Wiclif's learning: but the worldly Priests
Who fear the king's hard common-sense should find
What rotten piles uphold their mason-work,
Urge him to foreign war. O had he will'd
I might have stricken a lusty stroke for him,
But he would not; far liever led my friend
Back to the pure and universal church,

[1] Richard II.

But he would not: whether that heirless flaw
In his throne's title make him feel so frail,
He leans on Antichrist; or that his mind,
So quick, so capable in soldiership,
In matters of the faith, alas the while!
More worth than all the kingdoms of this world,
Runs in the rut, a coward to the Priest.

Burnt—good Sir Roger Acton, my dear friend!
Burnt too, my faithful preacher, Beverley!
Lord give thou power to thy two witnesses!
Lest the false faith make merry over them!
Two—nay but thirty-nine have risen and stand,
Dark with the smoke of human sacrifice,
Before thy light, and cry continually—
Cry—against whom?
Him, who should bear the sword
Of Justice—what! the kingly, kindly boy;
Who took the world so easily heretofore,
My boon companion, tavern-fellow—him
Who gibed and japed—in many a merry tale

That shook our sides—at Pardoners, Summoners,
Friars, absolution-sellers, monkeries
And nunneries, when the wild hour and the wine
Had set the wits aflame.

Harry of Monmouth,

Or Amurath of the East?

Better to sink

Thy fleurs-de-lys in slime again, and fling
Thy royalty back into the riotous fits
Of wine and harlotry—thy shame, and mine,
Thy comrade—than to persecute the Lord,
And play the Saul that never will be Paul.

Burnt, burnt! and while this mitred Arundel
Dooms our unlicensed preacher to the flame,
The mitre-sanction'd harlot draws his clerks
Into the suburb—their hard celibacy,
Sworn to be veriest ice of pureness, molten
Into adulterous living, or such crimes
As holy Paul—a shame to speak of them—
Among the heathen—

Sanctuary granted
To bandit, thief, assassin—yea to him
Who hacks his mother's throat—denied to him,
Who finds the Saviour in his mother tongue.
The Gospel, the Priest's pearl, flung down to swine—
The swine, lay-men, lay-women, who will come,
God willing, to outlearn the filthy friar.
Ah rather, Lord, than that thy Gospel, meant
To course and range thro' all the world, should be
Tether'd to these dead pillars of the Church—
Rather than so, if thou wilt have it so,
Burst vein, snap sinew, and crack heart, and life
Pass in the fire of Babylon! but how long,
O Lord, how long!

My friend should meet me here.
Here is the copse, the fountain and—a Cross!
To thee, dead wood, I bow not head nor knees.
Rather to thee, green boscage, work of God,
Black holly, and white-flower'd wayfaring-tree!
Rather to thee, thou living water, drawn
By this good Wiclif mountain down from heaven,

And speaking clearly in thy native tongue—
No Latin—He that thirsteth, come and drink!

Eh! how I anger'd Arundel asking me
To worship Holy Cross! I spread mine arms,
God's work, I said, a cross of flesh and blood
And holier. That was heresy. (My good friend
By this time should be with me.) 'Images?'
'Bury them as God's truer images
Are daily buried.' 'Heresy.—Penance?' 'Fast,
Hairshirt and scourge—nay, let a man repent,
Do penance in his heart, God hears him.' 'Heresy—
Not shriven, not saved?' 'What profits an ill Priest
Between me and my God? I would not spurn
Good counsel of good friends, but shrive myself
No, not to an Apostle.' 'Heresy.'
(My friend is long in coming.) 'Pilgrimages?'
'Drink, bagpipes, revelling, devil's-dances, vice.
The poor man's money gone to fat the friar.
Who reads of begging saints in Scripture?'—
'Heresy'—

(Hath he been here—not found me—gone again?
Have I mislearnt our place of meeting?) 'Bread—
Bread left after the blessing?' how they stared,
That was their main test-question—glared at me!
'He veil'd Himself in flesh, and now He veils
His flesh in bread, body and bread together.'
Then rose the howl of all the cassock'd wolves,
'No bread, no bread. God's body!' Archbishop,
Bishop,
Priors, Canons, Friars, bellringers, Parish-clerks—
'No bread, no bread!'—'Authority of the Church,
Power of the keys!'—Then I, God help me, I
So mock'd, so spurn'd, so baited two whole days—
I lost myself and fell from evenness,
And rail'd at all the Popes, that ever since
Sylvester shed the venom of world-wealth
Into the church, had only prov'n themselves
Poisoners, murderers. Well—God pardon all—
Me, them, and all the world—yea, that proud Priest,
That mock-meek mouth of utter Antichrist,
That traitor to King Richard and the truth,

Who rose and doom'd me to the fire.

Amen!

Nay, I can burn, so that the Lord of life
Be by me in my death.

Those three! the fourth
Was like the Son of God! Not burnt were they.
On *them* the smell of burning had not past.
That was a miracle to convert the king.
These Pharisees, this Caiaphas-Arundel
What miracle could turn? *He* here again,
He thwarting their traditions of Himself,
He would be found a heretic to Himself,
And doom'd to burn alive.

So, caught, I burn.
Burn? heathen men have borne as much as this,
For freedom, or the sake of those they loved,
Or some less cause, some cause far less than mine;
For every other cause is less than mine.
The moth will singe her wings, and singed return,
Her love of light quenching her fear of pain—
How now, my soul, we do not heed the fire?

Faint-hearted? tut!—faint-stomach'd! faint as I am,
God willing, I will burn for Him.
Who comes?
A thousand marks are set upon my head.
Friend?—foe perhaps—a tussle for it then!
Nay, but my friend. Thou art so well disguised,
I knew thee not. Hast thou brought bread with thee?
I have not broken bread for fifty hours.
None? I am damn'd already by the Priest
For holding there was bread where bread was none—
No bread. My friends await me yonder? Yes.
Lead on then. *Up* the mountain? Is it far?
Not far. Climb first and reach me down thy hand.
I am not like to die for lack of bread,
For I must live to testify by fire.[1]

[1] He was burnt on Christmas Day, 1417.

COLUMBUS.

CHAINS, my good lord: in your raised brows I read
Some wonder at our chamber ornaments.
We brought this iron from our isles of gold.

Does the king know you deign to visit him
Whom once he rose from off his throne to greet
Before his people, like his brother king?
I saw your face that morning in the crowd.

At Barcelona—tho' you were not then
So bearded. Yes. The city deck'd herself
To meet me, roar'd my name; the king, the queen
Bad me be seated, speak, and tell them all
The story of my voyage, and while I spoke
The crowd's roar fell as at the 'Peace, be still!'

And when I ceased to speak, the king, the queen,
Sank from their thrones, and melted into tears,
And knelt, and lifted hand and heart and voice
In praise to God who led me thro' the waste.
And then the great 'Laudamus' rose to heaven.

Chains for the Admiral of the Ocean! chains
For him who gave a new heaven, a new earth
As holy John had prophesied of me,
Gave glory and more empire to the kings
Of Spain than all their battles! chains for him
Who push'd his prows into the setting sun,
And made West East, and sail'd the Dragon's mouth,
And came upon the Mountain of the World,
And saw the rivers roll from Paradise!

Chains! we are Admirals of the Ocean, we,
We and our sons for ever. Ferdinand
Hath sign'd it and our Holy Catholic queen—
Of the Ocean—of the Indies—Admirals we—
Our title, which we never mean to yield,

Our guerdon not alone for what we did,
But our amends for all we might have done—
The vast occasion of our stronger life—
Eighteen long years of waste, seven in your Spain,
Lost, showing courts and kings a truth the babe
Will suck in with his milk hereafter—earth
A sphere.

Were *you* at Salamanca? No.
We fronted there the learning of all Spain,
All their cosmogonies, their astronomies:
Guess-work *they* guess'd it, but the golden guess
Is morning-star to the full round of truth.
No guess-work! I was certain of my goal;
Some thought it heresy, but that would not hold.
King David call'd the heavens a hide, a tent
Spread over earth, and so this earth was flat:
Some cited old Lactantius: could it be
That trees grew downward, rain fell upward, men
Walk'd like the fly on ceilings? and besides,
The great Augustine wrote that none could breathe

Within the zone of heat; so might there be
Two Adams, two mankinds, and that was clean
Against God's word: thus was I beaten back,
And chiefly to my sorrow by the Church,
And thought to turn my face from Spain, appeal
Once more to France or England; but our Queen
Recall'd me, for at last their Highnesses
Were half-assured this earth might be a sphere.

All glory to the all-blessed Trinity,
All glory to the mother of our Lord,
And Holy Church, from whom I never swerved
Not even by one hair's-breadth of heresy,
I have accomplish'd what I came to do.

Not yet—not all—last night a dream—I sail'd
On my first voyage, harass'd by the frights
Of my first crew, their curses and their groans.
The great flame-banner borne by Teneriffe,
The compass, like an old friend false at last
In our most need, appall'd them, and the wind

Still westward, and the weedy seas—at length
The landbird, and the branch with berries on it,
The carven staff—and last the light, the light
On Guanahani! but I changed the name;
San Salvador I call'd it; and the light
Grew as I gazed, and brought out a broad sky
Of dawning over—not those alien palms,
The marvel of that fair new nature—not
That Indian isle, but our most ancient East
Moriah with Jerusalem; and I saw
The glory of the Lord flash up, and beat
Thro' all the homely town from jasper, sapphire,
Chalcedony, emerald, sardonyx, sardius,
Chrysolite, beryl, topaz, chrysoprase,
Jacynth, and amethyst—and those twelve gates,
Pearl—and I woke, and thought—death—I shall die—
I am written in the Lamb's own Book of Life
To walk within the glory of the Lord
Sunless and moonless, utter light—but no!
The Lord had sent this bright, strange dream to me
To mind me of the secret vow I made

When Spain was waging war against the Moor—
I strove myself with Spain against the Moor.
There came two voices from the Sepulchre,
Two friars crying that if Spain should oust
The Moslem from her limit, he, the fierce
Soldan of Egypt, would break down and raze
The blessed tomb of Christ; whereon I vow'd
That, if our Princes harken'd to my prayer,
Whatever wealth I brought from that new world
Should, in this old, be consecrate to lead
A new crusade against the Saracen,
And free the Holy Sepulchre from thrall.

Gold? I had brought your Princes gold enough
If left alone! Being but a Genovese,
I am handled worse than had I been a Moor,
And breach'd the belting wall of Cambalu,
And given the Great Khan's palaces to the Moor,
Or clutch'd the sacred crown of Prester John,
And cast it to the Moor: but *had* I brought
From Solomon's now-recover'd Ophir all

The gold that Solomon's navies carried home,
Would that have gilded *me?* Blue blood of Spain,
Tho' quartering your own royal arms of Spain,
I have not: blue blood and black blood of Spain,
The noble and the convict of Castile,
Howl'd me from Hispaniola; for you know
The flies at home, that ever swarm about
And cloud the highest heads, and murmur down
Truth in the distance—these outbuzz'd me so
That even our prudent king, our righteous queen—
I pray'd them being so calumniated
They would commission one of weight and worth
To judge between my slander'd self and me—
Fonseca my main enemy at their court,
They sent me out *his* tool, Bovadilla, one
As ignorant and impolitic as a beast—
Blockish irreverence, brainless greed—who sack'd
My dwelling, seized upon my papers, loosed
My captives, feed the rebels of the crown,
Sold the crown-farms for all but nothing, gave
All but free leave for all to work the mines,

Drove me and my good brothers home in chains,
And gathering ruthless gold—a single piece
Weigh'd nigh four thousand Castillanos—so
They tell me—weigh'd him down into the abysm—
The hurricane of the latitude on him fell,
The seas of our discovering over-roll
Him and his gold; the frailer caravel,
With what was mine, came happily to the shore.
There was a glimmering of God's hand.

And God
Hath more than glimmer'd on me. O my lord,
I swear to you I heard his voice between
The thunders in the black Veragua nights,
'O soul of little faith, slow to believe!
Have I not been about thee from thy birth?
Given thee the keys of the great Ocean-sea?
Set thee in light till time shall be no more?
Is it I who have deceived thee or the world?
Endure! thou hast done so well for men, that men
Cry out against thee: was it otherwise
With mine own Son?'

And more than once in days
Of doubt and cloud and storm, when drowning hope
Sank all but out of sight, I heard his voice,
'Be not cast down. I lead thee by the hand,
Fear not.' And I shall hear his voice again—
I know that he has led me all my life,
I am not yet too old to work his will—
His voice again.

Still for all that, my lord,
I lying here bedridden and alone,
Cast off, put by, scouted by court and king—
The first discoverer starves—his followers, all
Flower into fortune—our world's way—and I,
Without a roof that I can call mine own,
With scarce a coin to buy a meal withal,
And seeing what a door for scoundrel scum
I open'd to the West, thro' which the lust,
Villany, violence, avarice, of your Spain
Pour'd in on all those happy naked isles—
Their kindly native princes slain or slaved,

Their wives and children Spanish concubines,
Their innocent hospitalities quench'd in blood,
Some dead of hunger, some beneath the scourge,
Some over-labour'd, some by their own hands,—
Yea, the dear mothers, crazing Nature, kill
Their babies at the breast for hate of Spain—
Ah God, the harmless people whom we found
In Hispaniola's island-Paradise!
Who took us for the very Gods from Heaven,
And we have sent them very fiends from Hell;
And I myself, myself not blameless, I
Could sometimes wish I had never led the way.

Only the ghost of our great Catholic Queen
Smiles on me, saying, 'Be thou comforted!
This creedless people will be brought to Christ
And own the holy governance of Rome.'

But who could dream that we, who bore the Cross
Thither, were excommunicated there,
For curbing crimes that scandalised the Cross,

By him, the Catalonian Minorite,
Rome's Vicar in our Indies? who believe
These hard memorials of our truth to Spain
Clung closer to us for a longer term
Than any friend of ours at Court? and yet
Pardon—too harsh, unjust. I am rack'd with pains.

You see that I have hung them by my bed,
And I will have them buried in my grave.

Sir, in that flight of ages which are God's
Own voice to justify the dead—perchance
Spain once the most chivalric race on earth,
Spain then the mightiest, wealthiest realm on earth,
So made by me, may seek to unbury me,
To lay me in some shrine of this old Spain,
Or in that vaster Spain I leave to Spain.
Then some one standing by my grave will say,
'Behold the bones of Christopher Colòn'—
'Ay, but the chains, what do *they* mean—the chains?'—
I sorrow for that kindly child of Spain

Who then will have to answer, 'These same chains
Bound these same bones back thro' the Atlantic sea,
Which he unchain'd for all the world to come.'

O Queen of Heaven who seest the souls in Hell
And purgatory, I suffer all as much
As they do—for the moment. Stay, my son
Is here anon: my son will speak for me
Ablier than I can in these spasms that grind
Bone against bone. You will not. One last word.

You move about the Court, I pray you tell
King Ferdinand who plays with me, that one,
Whose life has been no play with him and his
Hidalgos—shipwrecks, famines, fevers, fights,
Mutinies, treacheries—wink'd at, and condoned—
That I am loyal to him till the death,
And ready—tho' our Holy Catholic Queen,
Who fain had pledged her jewels on my first voyage,
Whose hope was mine to spread the Catholic faith,
Who wept with me when I return'd in chains,

Who sits beside the blessed Virgin now,
To whom I send my prayer by night and day—
She is gone—but you will tell the King, that I,
Rack'd as I am with gout, and wrench'd with pains
Gain'd in the service of His Highness, yet
Am ready to sail forth on one last voyage,
And readier, if the King would hear, to lead
One last crusade against the Saracen,
And save the Holy Sepulchre from thrall.

Going? I am old and slighted: you have dared
Somewhat perhaps in coming? my poor thanks!
I am but an alien and a Genovese.

THE VOYAGE OF MAELDUNE.

(FOUNDED ON AN IRISH LEGEND. A.D. 700.)

I.

I was the chief of the race—he had stricken my father dead—
But I gather'd my fellows together, I swore I would strike off his head.
Each of them look'd like a king, and was noble in birth as in worth,
And each of them boasted he sprang from the oldest race upon earth.
Each was as brave in the fight as the bravest hero of song,
And each of them liefer had died than have done one another a wrong.

He lived on an isle in the ocean—we sail'd on a Friday morn—
He that had slain my father the day before I was born.

II.

And we came to the isle in the ocean, and there on the shore was he.
But a sudden blast blew us out and away thro' a boundless sea.

III.

And we came to the Silent Isle that we never had touch'd at before,
Where a silent ocean always broke on a silent shore,
And the brooks glitter'd on in the light without sound, and the long waterfalls
Pour'd in a thunderless plunge to the base of the mountain walls,
And the poplar and cypress unshaken by storm flourish'd up beyond sight,

And the pine shot aloft from the crag to an unbelievable height,

And high in the heaven above it there flicker'd a songless lark,

And the cock couldn't crow, and the bull couldn't low, and the dog couldn't bark.

And round it we went, and thro' it, but never a murmur, a breath—

It was all of it fair as life, it was all of it quiet as death,

And we hated the beautiful Isle, for whenever we strove to speak

Our voices were thinner and fainter than any flitter-mouse-shriek;

And the men that were mighty of tongue and could raise such a battle-cry

That a hundred who heard it would rush on a thousand lances and die—

O they to be dumb'd by the charm!—so fluster'd with anger were they

They almost fell on each other; but after we sail'd away.

IV.

And we came to the Isle of Shouting, we landed, a score of wild birds
Cried from the topmost summit with human voices and words;
Once in an hour they cried, and whenever their voices peal'd
The steer fell down at the plow and the harvest died from the field,
And the men dropt dead in the valleys and half of the cattle went lame,
And the roof sank in on the hearth, and the dwelling broke into flame;
And the shouting of these wild birds ran into the hearts of my crew,
Till they shouted along with the shouting and seized one another and slew;
But I drew them the one from the other; I saw that we could not stay,

And we left the dead to the birds and we sail'd with our wounded away.

v.

And we came to the Isle of Flowers: their breath met us out on the seas,

For the Spring and the middle Summer sat each on the lap of the breeze;

And the red passion-flower to the cliffs, and the dark-blue clematis, clung,

And starr'd with a myriad blossom the long convolvulus hung;

And the topmost spire of the mountain was lilies in lieu of snow,

And the lilies like glaciers winded down, running out below

Thro' the fire of the tulip and poppy, the blaze of gorse, and the blush

Of millions of roses that sprang without leaf or a thorn from the bush;

And the whole isle-side flashing down from the peak without ever a tree

Swept like a torrent of gems from the sky to the blue of the sea;

And we roll'd upon capes of crocus and vaunted our kith and our kin,

And we wallow'd in beds of lilies, and chanted the triumph of Finn,

Till each like a golden image was pollen'd from head to feet

And each was as dry as a cricket, with thirst in the middle-day heat.

Blossom and blossom, and promise of blossom, but never a fruit!

And we hated the Flowering Isle, as we hated the isle that was mute,

And we tore up the flowers by the million and flung them in bight and bay,

And we left but a naked rock, and in anger we sail'd away.

VI.

And we came to the Isle of Fruits: all round from the cliffs and the capes,
Purple or amber, dangled a hundred fathom of grapes,
And the warm melon lay like a little sun on the tawny sand,
And the fig ran up from the beach and rioted over the land,
And the mountain arose like a jewell'd throne thro' the fragrant air,
Glowing with all-colour'd plums and with golden masses of pear,
And the crimson and scarlet of berries that flamed upon bine and vine,
But in every berry and fruit was the poisonous pleasure of wine;
And the peak of the mountain was apples, the hugest that ever were seen,
And they prest, as they grew, on each other, with hardly a leaflet between,

And all of them redder than rosiest health or than utterest shame,

And setting, when Even descended, the very sunset aflame;

And we stay'd three days, and we gorged and we madden'd, till every one drew

His sword on his fellow to slay him, and ever they struck and they slew;

And myself, I had eaten but sparely, and fought till I sunder'd the fray,

Then I bad them remember my father's death, and we sail'd away.

VII.

And we came to the Isle of Fire: we were lured by the light from afar,

For the peak sent up one league of fire to the Northern Star;

Lured by the glare and the blare, but scarcely could stand upright,

For the whole isle shudder'd and shook like a man in a mortal affright;

We were giddy besides with the fruits we had gorged, and so crazed that at last

There were some leap'd into the fire; and away we sail'd, and we past

Over that undersea isle, where the water is clearer than air:

Down we look'd: what a garden! O bliss, what a Paradise there!

Towers of a happier time, low down in a rainbow deep

Silent palaces, quiet fields of eternal sleep!

And three of the gentlest and best of my people, whate'er I could say,

Plunged head down in the sea, and the Paradise trembled away.

VIII.

And we came to the Bounteous Isle, where the heavens lean low on the land,

And ever at dawn from the cloud glitter'd o'er us a sunbright hand,

Then it open'd and dropt at the side of each man, as he rose from his rest,

Bread enough for his need till the labourless day dipt under the West;

And we wander'd about it and thro' it. O never was time so good!

And we sang of the triumphs of Finn, and the boast of our ancient blood,

And we gazed at the wandering wave as we sat by the gurgle of springs,

And we chanted the songs of the Bards and the glories of fairy kings;

But at length we began to be weary, to sigh, and to stretch and yawn,

Till we hated the Bounteous Isle and the sunbright hand of the dawn,

For there was not an enemy near, but the whole green Isle was our own,

And we took to playing at ball, and we took to throwing the stone,

And we took to playing at battle, but that was a perilous play,

For the passion of battle was in us, we slew and we sail'd away.

IX.

And we past to the Isle of Witches and heard their musical cry—

'Come to us, O come, come' in the stormy red of a sky

Dashing the fires and the shadows of dawn on the beautiful shapes,

For a wild witch naked as heaven stood on each of the loftiest capes,

And a hundred ranged on the rock like white sea-birds in a row,

And a hundred gamboll'd and pranced on the wrecks in the sand below,

And a hundred splash'd from the ledges, and bosom'd
the burst of the spray,
But I knew we should fall on each other, and hastily
sail'd away.

X.

And we came in an evil time to the Isle of the Double
Towers,
One was of smooth-cut stone, one carved all over with
flowers,
But an earthquake always moved in the hollows under
the dells,
And they shock'd on each other and butted each other
with clashing of bells,
And the daws flew out of the Towers and jangled and
wrangled in vain,
And the clash and boom of the bells rang into the
heart and the brain,
Till the passion of battle was on us, and all took sides
with the Towers,

There were some for the clean-cut stone, there were more for the carven flowers,

And the wrathful thunder of God peal'd over us all the day,

For the one half slew the other, and after we sail'd away.

XI.

And we came to the Isle of a Saint who had sail'd with St. Brendan of yore,

He had lived ever since on the Isle and his winters were fifteen score,

And his voice was low as from other worlds, and his eyes were sweet,

And his white hair sank to his heels and his white beard fell to his feet,

And he spake to me, 'O Maeldune, let be this purpose of thine!

Remember the words of the Lord when he told us "Vengeance is mine!"

His fathers have slain thy fathers in war or in single strife,

Thy fathers have slain his fathers, each taken a life for a life,

Thy father had slain his father, how long shall the murder last?

Go back to the Isle of Finn and suffer the Past to be Past.'

And we kiss'd the fringe of his beard and we pray'd as we heard him pray,

And the Holy man he assoil'd us, and sadly we sail'd away.

XII.

And we came to the Isle we were blown from, and there on the shore was he,

The man that had slain my father. I saw him and let him be.

O weary was I of the travel, the trouble, the strife and the sin,

When I landed again, with a tithe of my men, on the Isle of Finn.

DE PROFUNDIS:

THE TWO GREETINGS.

I.

Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
Where all that was to be, in all that was,
Whirl'd for a million æons thro' the vast
Waste dawn of multitudinous-eddying light—
Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
Thro' all this changing world of changeless law,
And every phase of ever-heightening life,
And nine long months of antenatal gloom,
With this last moon, this crescent—her dark orb
Touch'd with earth's light—thou comest, darling boy;
Our own; a babe in lineament and limb
Perfect, and prophet of the perfect man;
Whose face and form are hers and mine in one,

Indissolubly married like our love;
Live, and be happy in thyself, and serve
This mortal race thy kin so well, that men
May bless thee as we bless thee, O young life
Breaking with laughter from the dark; and may
The fated channel where thy motion lives
Be prosperously shaped, and sway thy course
Along the years of haste and random youth
Unshatter'd; then full-current thro' full man;
And last in kindly curves, with gentlest fall,
By quiet fields, a slowly-dying power,
To that last deep where we and thou are still.

II.

I.

Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
From that great deep, before our world begins,
Whereon the Spirit of God moves as he will—
Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
From that true world within the world we see.

Whereof our world is but the bounding shore—
Out of the deep, Spirit, out of the deep,
With this ninth moon, that sends the hidden sun
Down yon dark sea, thou comest, darling boy.

II.

For in the world, which is not ours, They said
'Let us make man' and that which should be man,
From that one light no man can look upon,
Drew to this shore lit by the suns and moons
And all the shadows. O dear Spirit half-lost
In thine own shadow and this fleshly sign
That thou art thou—who wailest being born
And banish'd into mystery, and the pain
Of this divisible-indivisible world
Among the numerable-innumerable
Sun, sun, and sun, thro' finite-infinite space
In finite-infinite Time—our mortal veil
And shatter'd phantom of that infinite One,
Who made thee unconceivably Thyself
Out of His whole World-self and all in all—

Live thou! and of the grain and husk, the grape
And ivyberry, choose; and still depart
From death to death thro' life and life, and find
Nearer and ever nearer Him, who wrought
Not Matter, nor the finite-infinite,
But this main-miracle, that thou art thou,
With power on thine own act and on the world.

THE HUMAN CRY.

I.

HALLOWED be Thy name—Halleluiah!—
Infinite Ideality!
Immeasurable Reality!
Infinite Personality!
Hallowed be Thy name—Halleluiah!

II.

We feel we are nothing—for all is Thou and in Thee;
We feel we are something—*that* also has come from Thee;
We know we are nothing—but Thou will help us to be.
Hallowed be Thy name—Halleluiah!

PREFATORY SONNET

TO THE 'NINETEENTH CENTURY.'

THOSE that of late had fleeted far and fast
To touch all shores, now leaving to the skill
Of others their old craft seaworthy still,
Have charter'd this; where, mindful of the past,
Our true co-mates regather round the mast;
Of diverse tongue, but with a common will
Here, in this roaring moon of daffodil
And crocus, to put forth and brave the blast;
For some, descending from the sacred peak
Of hoar high-templed Faith, have leagued again
Their lot with ours to rove the world about;
And some are wilder comrades, sworn to seek
If any golden harbour be for men
In seas of Death and sunless gulfs of Doubt.

TO THE REV. W. H. BROOKFIELD.

Brooks, for they call'd you so that knew you best,
Old Brooks, who loved so well to mouth my rhymes,
How oft we two have heard St. Mary's chimes!
How oft the Cantab supper, host and guest,
Would echo helpless laughter to your jest!
How oft with him we paced that walk of limes,
Him, the lost light of those dawn-golden times,
Who loved you well! Now both are gone to rest.
You man of humorous-melancholy mark,
Dead of some inward agony—is it so?
Our kindlier, trustier Jaques, past away!
I cannot laud this life, it looks so dark:
Σκιᾶς ὄναρ—dream of a shadow, go—
God bless you. I shall join you in a day.

MONTENEGRO.

They rose to where their sovran eagle sails,
They kept their faith, their freedom, on the height,
Chaste, frugal, savage, arm'd by day and night
Against the Turk; whose inroad nowhere scales
Their headlong passes, but his footstep fails,
And red with blood the Crescent reels from fight
Before their dauntless hundreds, in prone flight
By thousands down the crags and thro' the vales.
O smallest among peoples! rough rock-throne
Of Freedom! warriors beating back the swarm
Of Turkish Islam for five hundred years,
Great Tsernogora! never since thine own
Black ridges drew the cloud and brake the storm
Has breathed a race of mightier mountaineers.

TO VICTOR HUGO.

Victor in Drama, Victor in Romance,
Cloud-weaver of phantasmal hopes and fears,
French of the French, and Lord of human tears;
Child-lover; Bard whose fame-lit laurels glance
Darkening the wreaths of all that would advance,
Beyond our strait, their claim to be thy peers;
Weird Titan by thy winter weight of years
As yet unbroken, stormy voice of France!
Who dost not love our England—so they say;
I know not—England, France, all man to be
Will make one people ere man's race be run:
And I, desiring that diviner day,
Yield thee full thanks for thy full courtesy
To younger England in the boy my son.

TRANSLATIONS, ETC.

BATTLE OF BRUNANBURH.

Constantinus, King of the Scots, after having sworn allegiance to Athelstan, allied himself with the Danes of Ireland under Anlaf, and invading England, was defeated by Athelstan and his brother Edmund with great slaughter at Brunanburh in the year 937.

I.

[1] ATHELSTAN King,
Lord among Earls,
Bracelet-bestower and
Baron of Barons,
He with his brother,
Edmund Atheling,
Gaining a lifelong
Glory in battle,

[1] I have more or less availed myself of my son's prose translation of this poem in the *Contemporary Review* (November 1876).

Slew with the sword-edge
There by Brunanburh,
Brake the shield-wall,
Hew'd the lindenwood,[1]
Hack'd the battleshield,
Sons of Edward with hammer'd brands.

II.

Theirs was a greatness
Got from their Grandsires—
Theirs that so often in
Strife with their enemies
Struck for their hoards and their hearths and their homes.

III.

Bow'd the spoiler,
Bent the Scotsman,
Fell the shipcrews
Doom'd to the death.

[1] Shields of lindenwood.

All the field with blood of the fighters
Flow'd, from when first the great
Sun-star of morningtide,
Lamp of the Lord God
Lord everlasting,
Glode over earth till the glorious creature
Sank to his setting.

IV.

There lay many a man
Marr'd by the javelin,
Men of the Northland
Shot over shield.
There was the Scotsman
Weary of war.

V.

We the West-Saxons,
Long as the daylight
Lasted, in companies

Troubled the track of the host that we hated,
Grimly with swords that were sharp from the grind-
stone,
Fiercely we hack'd at the flyers before us.

VI.

Mighty the Mercian,
Hard was his hand-play,
Sparing not any of
Those that with Anlaf,
Warriors over the
Weltering waters
Borne in the bark's-bosom,
Drew to this island:
Doom'd to the death.

VII.

Five young kings put asleep by the sword-stroke,
Seven strong Earls of the army of Anlaf
Fell on the war-field, numberless numbers,
Shipmen and Scotsmen.

VIII.

Then the Norse leader,
Dire was his need of it,
Few were his following,
Fled to his warship:
Fleeted his vessel to sea with the king in it,
Saving his life on the fallow flood.

IX.

Also the crafty one,
Constantinus,
Crept to his North again,
Hoar-headed hero!

X.

Slender warrant had
He to be proud of
The welcome of war-knives—
He that was reft of his
Folk and his friends that had

Fallen in conflict,
Leaving his son too
Lost in the carnage,
Mangled to morsels,
A youngster in war!

XI.

Slender reason had
He to be glad of
The clash of the war-glaive—
Traitor and trickster
And spurner of treaties—
He nor had Anlaf
With armies so broken
A reason for bragging
That they had the better
In perils of battle
On places of slaughter—
The struggle of standards,
The rush of the javelins,

The crash of the charges,[1]
The wielding of weapons—
The play that they play'd with
The children of Edward.

XII.

Then with their nail'd prows
Parted the Norsemen, a
Blood-redden'd relic of
Javelins over
The jarring breaker, the deep-sea billow,
Shaping their way toward Dyflen[2] again,
Shamed in their souls.

XIII.

Also the brethren,
King and Atheling,
Each in his glory,
Went to his own in his own West-Saxonland,
Glad of the war.

[1] Lit. 'the gathering of men.' [2] Dublin.

XIV.

Many a carcase they left to be carrion,
Many a livid one, many a sallow-skin—
Left for the white-tail'd eagle to tear it, and
Left for the horny-nibb'd raven to rend it, and
Gave to the garbaging war-hawk to gorge it, and
That gray beast, the wolf of the weald.

XV.

Never had huger
Slaughter of heroes
Slain by the sword-edge—
Such as old writers
Have writ of in histories—
Hapt in this isle, since
Up from the East hither
Saxon and Angle from
Over the broad billow
Broke into Britain with

Haughty war-workers who
Harried the Welshman, when
Earls that were lured by the
Hunger of glory gat
Hold of the land.

ACHILLES OVER THE TRENCH.

ILIAD, xviii. 202.

So saying, light-foot Iris pass'd away.
Then rose Achilles dear to Zeus; and round
The warrior's puissant shoulders Pallas flung
Her fringed ægis, and around his head
The glorious goddess wreath'd a golden cloud,
And from it lighted an all-shining flame.
As when a smoke from a city goes to heaven
Far off from out an island girt by foes,
All day the men contend in grievous war
From their own city, but with set of sun
Their fires flame thickly, and aloft the glare
Flies streaming, if perchance the neighbours round
May see, and sail to help them in the war;
So from his head the splendour went to heaven.

From wall to dyke he stept, he stood, nor join'd
The Achæans—honouring his wise mother's word—
There standing, shouted, and Pallas far away
Call'd; and a boundless panic shook the foe.
For like the clear voice when a trumpet shrills,
Blown by the fierce beleaguers of a town,
So rang the clear voice of Æakidês;
And when the brazen cry of Æakidês
Was heard among the Trojans, all their hearts
Were troubled, and the full-maned horses whirl'd
The chariots backward, knowing griefs at hand;
And sheer-astounded were the charioteers
To see the dread, unwearible fire
That always o'er the great Peleion's head
Burn'd, for the bright-eyed goddess made it burn.
Thrice from the dyke he sent his mighty shout,
Thrice backward reel'd the Trojans and allies;
And there and then twelve of their noblest died
Among their spears and chariots.

TO PRINCESS FREDERICA ON HER MARRIAGE.

O YOU that were eyes and light to the King till he past away
From the darkness of life—
He saw not his daughter—he blest her: the blind King sees you to-day,
He blesses the wife.

SIR JOHN FRANKLIN.

ON THE CENOTAPH IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

Not here! the white North has thy bones; and thou,
Heroic sailor-soul,
Art passing on thine happier voyage now
Toward no earthly pole.

TO DANTE.

(WRITTEN AT REQUEST OF THE FLORENTINES.)

KING, that hast reign'd six hundred years, and grown
In power, and ever growest, since thine own
Fair Florence honouring thy nativity,
Thy Florence now the crown of Italy,
Hath sought the tribute of a verse from me,
I, wearing but the garland of a day,
Cast at thy feet one flower that fades away.

TIRESIAS AND OTHER POEMS

TO E. FITZGERALD.

Old Fitz who from your suburb grange,
Where once I tarried for a while,
Glance at the wheeling Orb of change,
And greet it with a kindly smile;
Whom yet I see as there you sit
Beneath your sheltering garden-tree,
And while your doves about you flit,
And plant on shoulder, hand and knee,
Or on your head their rosy feet,
As if they knew your diet spares
Whatever moved in that full sheet
Let down to Peter at his prayers;
Who live on milk and meal and grass;
And once for ten long weeks I tried
Your table of Pythagoras,
And seem'd at first 'a thing enskied'
(As Shakespeare has it) airy-light
To float above the ways of men,
Then fell from that half-spiritual height

Chill'd, till I tasted flesh again
One night when earth was winter-black,
And all the heavens flash'd in frost;
And on me, half-asleep, came back
That wholesome heat the blood had lost,
And set me climbing icy capes
And glaciers, over which there roll'd
To meet me long-arm'd vines with grapes
Of Eshcol hugeness; for the cold
Without, and warmth within me, wrought
To mould the dream; but none can say
That Lenten fare makes Lenten thought,
Who reads your golden Eastern lay,
Than which I know no version done
In English more divinely well;
A planet equal to the sun
Which cast it, that large infidel
Your Omar; and your Omar drew
Full-handed plaudits from our best
In modern letters, and from two,
Old friends outvaluing all the rest,
Two voices heard on earth no more;
But we old friends are still alive,
And I am nearing seventy-four,
While you have touch'd at seventy-five,
And so I send a birthday line
Of greeting; and my son, who dipt

In some forgotten book of mine
With sallow scraps of manuscript,
And dating many a year ago,
Has hit on this, which you will take
My Fitz, and welcome, as I know
Less for its own than for the sake
Of one recalling gracious times,
When, in our younger London days,
You found some merit in my rhymes,
And I more pleasure in your praise.

TIRESIAS.

I WISH I were as in the years of old,
While yet the blessed daylight made itself
Ruddy thro' both the roofs of sight, and woke
These eyes, now dull, but then so keen to seek
The meanings ambush'd under all they saw,
The flight of birds, the flame of sacrifice,
What omens may foreshadow fate to man
And woman, and the secret of the Gods.

My son, the Gods, despite of human prayer,
Are slower to forgive than human kings.
The great God, Arês, burns in anger still
Against the guiltless heirs of him from Tyre,
Our Cadmus, out of whom thou art, who found
Beside the springs of Dircê, smote, and still'd
Thro' all its folds the multitudinous beast,
The dragon, which our trembling fathers call'd
The God's own son.

A tale, that told to me,
When but thine age, by age as winter-white
As mine is now, amazed, but made me yearn

For larger glimpses of that more than man
Which rolls the heavens, and lifts, and lays the deep,
Yet loves and hates with mortal hates and loves,
And moves unseen among the ways of men.

Then, in my wanderings all the lands that lie
Subjected to the Heliconian ridge
Have heard this footstep fall, altho' my wont
Was more to scale the highest of the heights
With some strange hope to see the nearer God.

One naked peak—the sister of the sun
Would climb from out the dark, and linger there
To silver all the valleys with her shafts—
There once, but long ago, five-fold thy term
Of years, I lay; the winds were dead for heat;
The noonday crag made the hand burn; and sick
For shadow—not one bush was near—I rose
Following a torrent till its myriad falls
Found silence in the hollows underneath.

There in a secret olive-glade I saw
Pallas Athene climbing from the bath
In anger; yet one glittering foot disturb'd
The lucid well; one snowy knee was prest
Against the margin flowers; a dreadful light
Came from her golden hair, her golden helm
And all her golden armour on the grass,
And from her virgin breast, and virgin eyes
Remaining fixt on mine, till mine grew dark

For ever, and I heard a voice that said
'Henceforth be blind, for thou hast seen too much,
And speak the truth that no man may believe.'
Son, in the hidden world of sight, that lives
Behind this darkness, I behold her still,
Beyond all work of those who carve the stone,
Beyond all dreams of Godlike womanhood,
Ineffable beauty, out of whom, at a glance,
And as it were, perforce, upon me flash'd
The power of prophesying—but to me
No power—so chain'd and coupled with the curse
Of blindness and their unbelief, who heard
And heard not, when I spake of famine, plague,
Shrine-shattering earthquake, fire, flood, thunder-
bolt,
And angers of the Gods for evil done
And expiation lack'd—no power on Fate,
Theirs, or mine own! for when the crowd would roar
For blood, for war, whose issue was their doom,
To cast wise words among the multitude
Was flinging fruit to lions; nor, in hours
Of civil outbreak, when I knew the twain
Would each waste each, and bring on both the yoke
Of stronger states, was mine the voice to curb
The madness of our cities and their kings.
Whoever turn'd upon his heel to hear
My warning that the tyranny of one

Was prelude to the tyranny of all?
My counsel that the tyranny of all
Led backward to the tyranny of one?
  This power hath work'd no good to aught that lives,
And these blind hands were useless in their wars.
O therefore that the unfulfill'd desire,
The grief for ever born from griefs to be,
The boundless yearning of the Prophet's heart—
Could *that* stand forth, and like a statue, rear'd
To some great citizen, win all praise from all
Who past it, saying, 'That was he!'
                In vain!
Virtue must shape itself in deed, and those
Whom weakness or necessity have cramp'd
Within themselves, immerging, each, his urn
In his own well, draw solace as he may.
  Menœceus, thou hast eyes, and I can hear
Too plainly what full tides of onset sap
Our seven high gates, and what a weight of war
Rides on those ringing axles! jingle of bits,
Shouts, arrows, tramp of the hornfooted horse
That grind the glebe to powder! Stony showers
Of that ear-stunning hail of Arês crash
Along the sounding walls. Above, below,
Shock after shock, the song-built towers and gates
Reel, bruised and butted with the shuddering
War-thunder of iron rams; and from within

The city comes a murmur void of joy,
Lest she be taken captive—maidens, wives,
And mothers with their babblers of the dawn,
And oldest age in shadow from the night,
Falling about their shrines before their Gods,
And wailing 'Save us.'

And they wail to thee!

These eyeless eyes, that cannot see thine own,
See this, that only in thy virtue lies
The saving of our Thebes; for, yesternight,
To me, the great God Arês, whose one bliss
Is war, and human sacrifice—himself
Blood-red from battle, spear and helmet tipt
With stormy light as on a mast at sea,
Stood out before a darkness, crying 'Thebes,
Thy Thebes shall fall and perish, for I loathe
The seed of Cadmus—yet if one of these
By his own hand—if one of these——'

My son,

No sound is breathed so potent to coerce,
And to conciliate, as their names who dare
For that sweet mother land which gave them birth
Nobly to do, nobly to die. Their names,
Graven on memorial columns, are a song
Heard in the future; few, but more than wall
And rampart, their examples reach a hand
Far thro' all years, and everywhere they meet

And kindle generous purpose, and the strength
To mould it into action pure as theirs.
Fairer thy fate than mine, if life's best end
Be to end well! and thou refusing this,
Unvenerable will thy memory be
While men shall move the lips: but if thou dare—
Thou, one of these, the race of Cadmus—then
No stone is fitted in yon marble girth
Whose echo shall not tongue thy glorious doom,
Nor in this pavement but shall ring thy name
To every hoof that clangs it, and the springs
Of Dircê laving yonder battle-plain,
Heard from the roofs by night, will murmur thee
To thine own Thebes, while Thebes thro' thee shall stand
Firm-based with all her Gods.
The Dragons' cave
Half hid, they tell me, now in flowing vines—
Where once he dwelt and whence he roll'd himself
At dead of night—thou knowest, and that smooth rock
Before it, altar-fashion'd, where of late
The woman-breasted Sphinx, with wings drawn back,
Folded her lion paws, and look'd to Thebes.
There blanch the bones of whom she slew, and these
Mixt with her own, because the fierce beast found
A wiser than herself, and dash'd herself
Dead in her rage: but thou art wise enough,

Tho' young, to love thy wiser, blunt the curse
Of Pallas, hear, and tho' I speak the truth
Believe I speak it, let thine own hand strike
Thy youthful pulses into rest and quench
The red God's anger, fearing not to plunge
Thy torch of life in darkness, rather—thou
Rejoicing that the sun, the moon, the stars
Send no such light upon the ways of men
As one great deed.
Thither, my son, and there
Thou, that hast never known the embrace of love,
Offer thy maiden life.
This useless hand!
I felt one warm tear fall upon it. Gone!
He will achieve his greatness.
But for me,
I would that I were gather'd to my rest,
And mingled with the famous kings of old,
On whom about their ocean-islets flash
The faces of the Gods—the wise man's word,
Here trampled by the populace underfoot,
There crown'd with worship—and these eyes will find
The men I knew, and watch the chariot whirl
About the goal again, and hunters race
The shadowy lion, and the warrior-kings,
In height and prowess more than human, strive
Again for glory, while the golden lyre

Is ever sounding in heroic ears
Heroic hymns, and every way the vales
Wind, clouded with the grateful incense-fume
Of those who mix all odour to the Gods
On one far height in one far-shining fire.

'One height and one far-shining fire'
And while I fancied that my friend
For this brief idyll would require
A less diffuse and opulent end,
And would defend his judgment well,
If I should deem it over nice—
The tolling of his funeral bell
Broke on my Pagan Paradise,
And mixt the dream of classic times
And all the phantoms of the dream,
With present grief, and made the rhymes,
That miss'd his living welcome, seem
Like would-be guests an hour too late,
Who down the highway moving on
With easy laughter find the gate
Is bolted, and the master gone.
Gone into darkness, that full light
Of friendship! past, in sleep, away
By night, into the deeper night!

The deeper night? A clearer day
Than our poor twilight dawn on earth—
If night, what barren toil to be!
What life, so maim'd by night, were worth
Our living out? Not mine to me
Remembering all the golden hours
Now silent, and so many dead,
And him the last; and laying flowers,
This wreath, above his honour'd head,
And praying that, when I from hence
Shall fade with him into the unknown,
My close of earth's experience
May prove as peaceful as his own.

THE WRECK.

I.

Hide me, Mother! my Fathers belong'd to the church of old,
I am driven by storm and sin and death to the ancient fold,
I cling to the Catholic Cross once more, to the Faith that saves,
My brain is full of the crash of wrecks, and the roar of waves,
My life itself is a wreck, I have sullied a noble name,
I am flung from the rushing tide of the world as a waif of shame,
I am roused by the wail of a child, and awake to a livid light,
And a ghastlier face than ever has haunted a grave by night,
I would hide from the storm without, I would flee from the storm within,
I would make my life one prayer for a soul that died in his sin,

I was the tempter, Mother, and mine was the deeper fall;
I will sit at your feet, I will hide my face, I will tell you all.

II.

He that they gave me to, Mother, a heedless and innocent bride—
I never have wrong'd his heart, I have only wounded his pride—
Spain in his blood and the Jew——dark-visaged, stately and tall—
A princelier-looking man never stept thro' a Prince's hall.
And who, when his anger was kindled, would venture to give him the nay?
And a man men fear is a man to be loved by the women they say.
And I could have loved him too, if the blossom can doat on the blight,
Or the young green leaf rejoice in the frost that sears it at night;
He would open the books that I prized, and toss them away with a yawn,
Repell'd by the magnet of Art to the which my nature was drawn,

The word of the Poet by whom the deeps of the world
are stirr'd,
The music that robes it in language beneath and be-
yond the word!
My Shelley would fall from my hands when he cast a
contemptuous glance
From where he was poring over his Tables of Trade
and Finance;
My hands, when I heard him coming would drop
from the chords or the keys,
But ever I fail'd to please him, however I strove to
please—
All day long far-off in the cloud of the city, and there
Lost, head and heart, in the chances of dividend,
consol, and share—
And at home if I sought for a kindly caress, being
woman and weak,
His formal kiss fell chill as a flake of snow on the
cheek:
And so, when I bore him a girl, when I held it aloft
in my joy,
He look'd at it coldly, and said to me 'Pity it isn't a
boy.'
The one thing given me, to love and to live for,
glanced at in scorn!
The child that I felt I could die for—as if she were
basely born!

I had lived a wild-flower life, I was planted now in a tomb;
The daisy will shut to the shadow, I closed my heart to the gloom;
I threw myself all abroad—I would play my part with the young
By the low foot-lights of the world—and I caught the wreath that was flung.

III.

Mother, I have not—however their tongues may have babbled of me—
Sinn'd thro' an animal vileness, for all but a dwarf was he,
And all but a hunchback too; and I look'd at him, first, askance
With pity—not he the knight for an amorous girl's romance!
Tho' wealthy enough to have bask'd in the light of a dowerless smile,
Having lands at home and abroad in a rich West-Indian isle;
But I came on him once at a ball, the heart of a listening crowd—
Why, what a brow was there! he was seated—speaking aloud

To women, the flower of the time, and men at the helm of state—
Flowing with easy greatness and touching on all things great,
Science, philosophy, song—till I felt myself ready to weep
For I knew not what, when I heard that voice,—as mellow and deep
As a psalm by a mighty master and peal'd from an organ,—roll
Rising and falling—for, Mother, the voice was the voice of the soul;
And the sun of the soul made day in the dark of his wonderful eyes.
Here was the hand that would help me, would heal me—the heart that was wise!
And he, poor man, when he learnt that I hated the ring I wore,
He helpt me with death, and he heal'd me with sorrow for evermore.

IV.

For I broke the bond. That day my nurse had brought me the child.
The small sweet face was flush'd, but it coo'd to the Mother and smiled.

'Anything ailing,' I ask'd her, 'with baby?' She shook her head,
And the Motherless Mother kiss'd it, and turn'd in her haste and fled.

v.

Low warm winds had gently breathed us away from the land—
Ten long sweet summer days upon deck, sitting hand in hand—
When he clothed a naked mind with the wisdom and wealth of his own,
And I bow'd myself down as a slave to his intellectual throne,
When he coin'd into English gold some treasure of classical song,
When he flouted a statesman's error, or flamed at a public wrong,
When he rose as it were on the wings of an eagle beyond me, and past
Over the range and the change of the world from the first to the last,
When he spoke of his tropical home in the canes by the purple tide,
And the high star-crowns of his palms on the deep-wooded mountain-side,

And cliffs all robed in lianas that dropt to the brink
of his bay,
And trees like the towers of a minster, the sons of a
winterless day.
'Paradise there!' so he said, but I seem'd in Para-
dise then
With the first great love I had felt for the first and
greatest of men;
Ten long days of summer and sin—if it must be so—
But days of a larger light than I ever again shall
know—
Days that will glimmer, I fear, thro' life to my latest
breath;
'No frost there,' so he said, 'as in truest Love no
Death.'

VI.

Mother, one morning a bird with a warble plaintively
sweet
Perch'd on the shrouds, and then fell fluttering down
at my feet;
I took it, he made it a cage, we fondled it, Stephen
and I,
But it died, and I thought of the child for a moment,
I scarce know why.

VII.

But if sin be sin, not inherited fate, as many will say,
My sin to my desolate little one found me at sea on a day,
When her orphan wail came borne in the shriek of a growing wind,
And a voice rang out in the thunders of Ocean and Heaven 'Thou hast sinn'd.'
And down in the cabin were we, for the towering crest of the tides
Plunged on the vessel and swept in a cataract off from her sides,
And ever the great storm grew with a howl and a hoot of the blast
In the rigging, voices of hell—then came the crash of the mast.
'The wages of sin is death,' and there I began to weep,
'I am the Jonah, the crew should cast me into the deep,
For ah God, what a heart was mine to forsake her even for you.'
'Never the heart among women,' he said, 'more tender and true.'
'The heart! not a mother's heart, when I left my darling alone.'

'Comfort yourself, for the heart of the father will
care for his own.'
'The heart of the father will spurn her,' I cried, 'for
the sin of the wife,
The cloud of the mother's shame will enfold her and
darken her life.'
Then his pale face twitch'd; 'O Stephen, I love you,
I love you, and yet'—
As I lean'd away from his arms—'would God, we had
never met!'
And he spoke not—only the storm; till after a little,
I yearn'd
For his voice again, and he call'd to me 'Kiss me!'
and there—as I turn'd—
'The heart, the heart!' I kiss'd him, I clung to the
sinking form,
And the storm went roaring above us, and he—was
out of the storm.

VIII.

And then, then, Mother, the ship stagger'd under a
thunderous shock,
That shook us asunder, as if she had struck and crash'd
on a rock;
For a huge sea smote every soul from the decks of
The Falcon but one;

All of them, all but the man that was lash'd to the helm had gone;
And I fell—and the storm and the days went by, but I knew no more—
Lost myself—lay like the dead by the dead on the cabin floor,
Dead to the death beside me, and lost to the loss that was mine,
With a dim dream, now and then, of a hand giving bread and wine,
Till I woke from the trance, and the ship stood still, and the skies were blue,
But the face I had known, O Mother, was not the face that I knew.

IX.

The strange misfeaturing mask that I saw so amazed me, that I
Stumbled on deck, half mad. I would fling myself over and die!
But one—he was waving a flag—the one man left on the wreck—
'Woman'—he grasp at my arm—'stay there'—I crouch'd upon deck—
'We are sinking, and yet there's hope: look yonder,' he cried, 'a sail'

In a tone so rough that I broke into passionate tears, and the wail
Of a beaten babe, till I saw that a boat was nearing us—then
All on a sudden I thought, I shall look on the child again.

X.

They lower'd me down the side, and there in the boat I lay
With sad eyes fixt on the lost sea-home, as we glided away,
And I sigh'd, as the low dark hull dipt under the smiling main,
'Had I stay'd with *him*, I had now—with *him*—been out of my pain.'

XI.

They took us aboard: the crew were gentle, the captain kind;
But *I* was the lonely slave of an often-wandering mind;
For whenever a rougher gust might tumble a stormier wave,
'O Stephen,' I moan'd, 'I am coming to thee in thine Ocean-grave.'

And again, when a balmier breeze curl'd over a peacefuller sea,
I found myself moaning again 'O child, I am coming to thee.'

XII.

The broad white brow of the Isle—that bay with the colour'd sand—
Rich was the rose of sunset there, as we drew to the land;
All so quiet the ripple would hardly blanch into spray
At the feet of the cliff; and I pray'd—'my child'—for I still could pray—
'May her life be as blissfully calm, be never gloom'd by the curse
Of a sin, not hers!'
Was it well with the child?
I wrote to the nurse
Who had borne my flower on her hireling heart; and an answer came
Not from the nurse—nor yet to the wife—to her maiden name!
I shook as I open'd the letter—I knew that hand too well—

And from it a scrap, clipt out of the 'deaths' in a paper, fell.

'Ten long sweet summer days' of fever, and want of care!

And gone—that day of the storm—O Mother, she came to me there.

DESPAIR.

A man and his wife having lost faith in a God, and hope of a life to come, and being utterly miserable in this, resolve to end themselves by drowning. The woman is drowned, but the man rescued by a minister of the sect he had abandoned.

I.

Is it you, that preach'd in the chapel there looking over the sand?
Follow'd us too that night, and dogg'd us, and drew me to land?

II.

What did I feel that night? You are curious. How should I tell?
Does it matter so much what I felt? You rescued me —yet—was it well
That you came unwish'd for, uncall'd, between me and the deep and my doom,
Three days since, three more dark days of the Godless gloom

Of a life without sun, without health, without hope, without any delight
In anything here upon earth? but ah God, that night, that night
When the rolling eyes of the lighthouse there on the fatal neck
Of land running out into rock—they had saved many hundreds from wreck—
Glared on our way toward death, I remember I thought, as we past,
Does it matter how many they saved? we are all of us wreck'd at last—
'Do you fear?' and there came thro' the roar of the breaker a whisper, a breath,
'Fear? am I not with you? I am frighted at life not death.'

III.

And the suns of the limitless Universe sparkled and shone in the sky,
Flashing with fires as of God, but we knew that their light was a lie—
Bright as with deathless hope—but, however they sparkled and shone,
The dark little worlds running round them were worlds of woe like our own—

No soul in the heaven above, no soul on the earth below,
A fiery scroll written over with lamentation and woe.

IV.

See, we were nursed in the drear nightfold of your fatalist creed,
And we turn'd to the growing dawn, we had hoped for a dawn indeed,
When the light of a Sun that was coming would scatter the ghosts of the Past,
And the cramping creeds that had madden'd the peoples would vanish at last,
And we broke away from the Christ, our human brother and friend,
For He spoke, or it seem'd that He spoke, of a Hell without help, without end.

V.

Hoped for a dawn and it came, but the promise had faded away;
We had past from a cheerless night to the glare of a drearier day;
He is only a cloud and a smoke who was once a pillar of fire,

The guess of a worm in the dust and the shadow of its desire—
Of a worm as it writhes in a world of the weak trodden down by the strong,
Of a dying worm in a world, all massacre, murder, and wrong.

VI.

O we poor orphans of nothing—alone on that lonely shore—
Born of the brainless Nature who knew not that which she bore!
Trusting no longer that earthly flower would be heavenly fruit—
Come from the brute, poor souls—no souls—and to die with the brute——

VII.

Nay, but I am not claiming your pity: I know you of old—
Small pity for those that have ranged from the narrow warmth of your fold,
Where you bawl'd the dark side of your faith and a God of eternal rage,
Till you flung us back on ourselves, and the human heart, and the Age.

VIII.

But pity—the Pagan held it a vice—was in her and in me,
Helpless, taking the place of the pitying God that should be!
Pity for all that aches in the grasp of an idiot power,
And pity for our own selves on an earth that bore not a flower;
Pity for all that suffers on land or in air or the deep,
And pity for our own selves till we long'd for eternal sleep.

IX.

'Lightly step over the sands! the waters—you hear them call!
Life with its anguish, and horrors, and errors—away with it all!'
And she laid her hand in my own—she was always loyal and sweet—
Till the points of the foam in the dusk came playing about our feet.
There was a strong sea-current would sweep us out to the main.
'Ah God' tho' I felt as I spoke I was taking the name in vain—

'Ah God' and we turn'd to each other, we kiss'd, we embraced, she and I,
Knowing the Love we were used to believe everlasting would die:
We had read their know-nothing books and we lean'd to the darker side—
Ah God, should we find Him, perhaps, perhaps, if we died, if we died;
We never had found Him on earth, this earth is a fatherless Hell—
'Dear Love, for ever and ever, for ever and ever farewell,'
Never a cry so desolate, not since the world began,
Never a kiss so sad, no, not since the coming of man!

X.

But the blind wave cast me ashore, and you saved me, a valueless life.
Not a grain of gratitude mine! You have parted the man from the wife.
I am left alone on the land, she is all alone in the sea;
If a curse meant ought, I would curse you for not having let me be.

XI.

Visions of youth—for my brain was drunk with the water, it seems;
I had past into perfect quiet at length out of pleasant dreams,
And the transient trouble of drowning—what was it when match'd with the pains
Of the hellish heat of a wretched life rushing back thro' the veins?

XII.

Why should I live? one son had forged on his father and fled,
And if I believed in a God, I would thank him, the other is dead,
And there was a baby-girl, that had never look'd on the light:
Happiest she of us all, for she past from the night to the night.

XIII.

But the crime, if a crime, of her eldest-born, her glory, her boast,

Struck hard at the tender heart of the mother, and broke it almost;
Tho', glory and shame dying out for ever in endless time,
Does it matter so much whether crown'd for a virtue, or hang'd for a crime?

XIV.

And ruin'd by *him*, by *him*, I stood there, naked, amazed
In a world of arrogant opulence, fear'd myself turning crazed,
And I would not be mock'd in a madhouse! and she, the delicate wife,
With a grief that could only be cured, if cured, by the surgeon's knife,—

XV.

Why should we bear with an hour of torture, a moment of pain,
If every man die for ever, if all his griefs are in vain,
And the homeless planet at length will be wheel'd thro' the silence of space,
Motherless evermore of an ever-vanishing race,

When the worm shall have writhed its last, and its last brother-worm will have fled
From the dead fossil skull that is left in the rocks of an earth that is dead?

XVI.

Have I crazed myself over their horrible infidel writings? O yes,
For these are the new dark ages, you see, of the popular press,
When the bat comes out of his cave, and the owls are whooping at noon,
And Doubt is the lord of this dunghill and crows to the sun and the moon,
Till the Sun and the Moon of our science are both of them turn'd into blood,
And Hope will have broken her heart, running after a shadow of good;
For their knowing and know-nothing books are scatter'd from hand to hand—
We have knelt in your know-all chapel too looking over the sand.

XVII.

What! I should call on that Infinite Love that has served us so well?

Infinite cruelty rather that made everlasting Hell,
Made us, foreknew us, foredoom'd us, and does what
he will with his own;
Better our dead brute mother who never has heard us
groan!

XVIII.

Hell? if the souls of men were immortal, as men
have been told,
The lecher would cleave to his lusts, and the miser
would yearn for his gold,
And so there were Hell for ever! but were there a
God as you say,
His Love would have power over Hell till it utterly
vanish'd away.

XIX.

Ah yet—I have had some glimmer, at times, in my
gloomiest woe,
Of a God behind all—after all—the great God for
aught that I know;
But the God of Love and of Hell together—they can-
not be thought,
If there be such a God, may the Great God curse him
and bring him to nought!

XX.

Blasphemy! whose is the fault? is it mine? for why would you save
A madman to vex you with wretched words, who is best in his grave?
Blasphemy! ay, why not, being damn'd beyond hope of grace?
O would I were yonder with her, and away from your faith and your face!
Blasphemy! true! I have scared you pale with my scandalous talk,
But the blasphemy to *my* mind lies all in the way that you walk.

XXI.

Hence! she is gone! can I stay? can I breathe divorced from the Past?
You needs must have good lynx-eyes if I do not escape you at last.
Our orthodox coroner doubtless will find it a felo-de-se,
And the stake and the cross-road, fool, if you will, does it matter to me?

THE ANCIENT SAGE.

A THOUSAND summers ere the time of Christ
From out his ancient city came a Seer
Whom one that loved, and honour'd him, and yet
Was no disciple, richly garb'd, but worn
From wasteful living, follow'd—in his hand
A scroll of verse—till that old man before
A cavern whence an affluent fountain pour'd
From darkness into daylight, turn'd and spoke.

This wealth of waters might but seem to draw
From yon dark cave, but, son, the source is higher,
Yon summit half-a-league in air—and higher,
The cloud that hides it—higher still, the heavens
Whereby the cloud was moulded, and whereout
The cloud descended. Force is from the heights.
I am wearied of our city, son, and go
To spend my one last year among the hills.
What hast thou there? Some deathsong for the Ghouls
To make their banquet relish? let me read.

"How far thro' all the bloom and brake
That nightingale is heard!
What power but the bird's could make
This music in the bird?
How summer-bright are yonder skies,
And earth as fair in hue!
And yet what sign of aught that lies
Behind the green and blue?
But man to-day is fancy's fool
As man hath ever been.
The nameless Power, or Powers, that rule
Were never heard or seen."

If thou would'st hear the Nameless, and wilt dive
Into the Temple-cave of thine own self,
There, brooding by the central altar, thou
May'st haply learn the Nameless hath a voice,
By which thou wilt abide, if thou be wise,
As if thou knewest, tho' thou canst not know;
For Knowledge is the swallow on the lake
That sees and stirs the surface-shadow there
But never yet hath dipt into the abysm,
The Abysm of all Abysms, beneath, within
The blue of sky and sea, the green of earth,
And in the million-millionth of a grain
Which cleft and cleft again for evermore,
And ever vanishing, never vanishes,

To me, my son, more mystic than myself,
Or even than the Nameless is to me.
And when thou sendest thy free soul thro' heaven,
Nor understandest bound nor boundlessness,
Thou seest the Nameless of the hundred names.
And if the Nameless should withdraw from all
Thy frailty counts most real, all thy world
Might vanish like thy shadow in the dark.

"And since—from when this earth began—
The Nameless never came
Among us, never spake with man,
And never named the Name"—

Thou canst not prove the Nameless, O my son,
Nor canst thou prove the world thou movest in,
Thou canst not prove that thou art body alone,
Nor canst thou prove that thou art spirit alone,
Nor canst thou prove that thou art both in one:
Thou canst not prove thou art immortal, no
Nor yet that thou art mortal—nay my son,
Thou canst not prove that I, who speak with thee,
Am not thyself in converse with thyself,
For nothing worthy proving can be proven,
Nor yet disproven: wherefore thou be wise,
Cleave ever to the sunnier side of doubt,
And cling to Faith beyond the forms of Faith!

She reels not in the storm of warring words,
She brightens at the clash of 'Yes' and 'No,'
She sees the Best that glimmers thro' the Worst,
She feels the Sun is hid but for a night,
She spies the summer thro' the winter bud,
She tastes the fruit before the blossom falls,
She hears the lark within the songless egg,
She finds the fountain where they wail'd 'Mirage'!

"What Power? aught akin to Mind,
The mind in me and you?
Or power as of the Gods gone blind
Who see not what they do?"

But some in yonder city hold, my son,
That none but Gods could build this house of ours,
So beautiful, vast, various, so beyond
All work of man, yet, like all work of man,
A beauty with defect——till That which knows,
And is not known, but felt thro' what we feel
Within ourselves is highest, shall descend
On this half-deed, and shape it at the last
According to the Highest in the Highest.

"What Power but the Years that make
And break the vase of clay,
And stir the sleeping earth, and wake

The bloom that fades away?
What rulers but the Days and Hours
That cancel weal with woe,
And wind the front of youth with flowers,
And cap our age with snow?"

The days and hours are ever glancing by,
And seem to flicker past thro' sun and shade,
Or short, or long, as Pleasure leads, or Pain;
But with the Nameless is nor Day nor Hour;
Tho' we, thin minds, who creep from thought to thought,
Break into 'Thens' and 'Whens' the Eternal Now:
This double seeming of the single world!—
My words are like the babblings in a dream
Of nightmare, when the babblings break the dream.
But thou be wise in this dream-world of ours,
Nor take thy dial for thy deity,
But make the passing shadow serve thy will.

"The years that made the stripling wise
Undo their work again,
And leave him, blind of heart and eyes,
The last and least of men;
Who clings to earth, and once would dare
Hell-heat or Arctic cold,
And now one breath of cooler air

Would loose him from his hold;
His winter chills him to the root,
He withers marrow and mind;
The kernel of the shrivell'd fruit
Is jutting thro' the rind;
The tiger spasms tear his chest,
The palsy wags his head;
The wife, the sons, who love him best
Would fain that he were dead;
The griefs by which he once was wrung
Were never worth the while"—

Who knows? or whether this earth-narrow life
Be yet but yolk, and forming in the shell?

"The shaft of scorn that once had stung
But wakes a dotard smile."

The placid gleam of sunset after storm!

"The statesman's brain that sway'd the past
Is feebler than his knees;
The passive sailor wrecks at last
In ever-silent seas;
The warrior hath forgot his arms,
The Learned all his lore;
The changing market frets or charms

The merchant's hope no more;
The prophet's beacon burn'd in vain,
And now is lost in cloud;
The plowman passes, bent with pain,
To mix with what he plow'd;
The poet whom his Age would quote
As heir of endless fame—
He knows not ev'n the book he wrote,
Not even his own name.
For man has overlived his day,
And, darkening in the light,
Scarce feels the senses break away
To mix with ancient Night."

The shell must break before the bird can fly.

"The years that when my Youth began
Had set the lily and rose
By all my ways where'er they ran,
Have ended mortal foes;
My rose of love for ever gone,
My lily of truth and trust—
They made her lily and rose in one,
And changed her into dust.
O rosetree planted in my grief,
And growing, on her tomb,
Her dust is greening in your leaf,

Her blood is in your bloom.
O slender lily waving there,
And laughing back the light,
In vain you tell me 'Earth is fair'
When all is dark as night."

My son, the world is dark with griefs and graves,
So dark that men cry out against the Heavens.
Who knows but that the darkness is in man?
The doors of Night may be the gates of Light;
For wert thou born or blind or deaf, and then
Suddenly heal'd, how would'st thou glory in all
The splendours and the voices of the world!
And we, the poor earth's dying race, and yet
No phantoms, watching from a phantom shore
Await the last and largest sense to make
The phantom walls of this illusion fade,
And show us that the world is wholly fair.

"But vain the tears for darken'd years
As laughter over wine,
And vain the laughter as the tears,
O brother, mine or thine,
For all that laugh, and all that weep
And all that breathe are one
Slight ripple on the boundless deep
That moves, and all is gone."

But that one ripple on the boundless deep
Feels that the deep is boundless, and itself
For ever changing form, but evermore
One with the boundless motion of the deep.

"Yet wine and laughter friends! and set
The lamps alight, and call
For golden music, and forget
The darkness of the pall."

If utter darkness closed the day, my son——
But earth's dark forehead flings athwart the heavens
Her shadow crown'd with stars—and yonder—out
To northward—some that never set, but pass
From sight and night to lose themselves in day.
I hate the black negation of the bier,
And wish the dead, as happier than ourselves
And higher, having climb'd one step beyond
Our village miseries, might be borne in white
To burial or to burning, hymn'd from hence
With songs in praise of death, and crown'd with flowers!

"O worms and maggots of to-day
Without their hope of wings!"

But louder than thy rhyme the silent Word
Of that world-prophet in the heart of man.

"Tho' some have gleams or so they say
Of more than mortal things."

To-day? but what of yesterday? for oft
On me, when boy, there came what then I call'd,
Who knew no books and no philosophies,
In my boy-phrase 'The Passion of the Past.'
The first gray streak of earliest summer-dawn,
The last long stripe of waning crimson gloom,
As if the late and early were but one—
A height, a broken grange, a grove, a flower
Had murmurs 'Lost and gone and lost and gone!'
A breath, a whisper—some divine farewell—
Desolate sweetness—far and far away—
What had he loved, what had he lost, the boy?
I know not and I speak of what has been.
And more, my son! for more than once when I
Sat all alone, revolving in myself
The word that is the symbol of myself,
The mortal limit of the Self was loosed,
And past into the Nameless, as a cloud
Melts into Heaven. I touch'd my limbs, the limbs
Were strange not mine—and yet no shade of doubt,
But utter clearness, and thro' loss of Self
The gain of such large life as match'd with ours
Were Sun to spark—unshadowable in words,
Themselves but shadows of a shadow-world.

"And idle gleams will come and go,
But still the clouds remain;"

The clouds themselves are children of the Sun.

"And Night and Shadow rule below
When only Day should reign."

And Day and Night are children of the Sun,
And idle gleams to thee are light to me.
Some say, the Light was father of the Night,
And some, the Night was father of the Light,
No night no day!—I touch thy world again—
No ill no good! such counter-terms, my son,
Are border-races, holding, each its own
By endless war: but night enough is there
In yon dark city: get thee back: and since
The key to that weird casket, which for thee
But holds a skull, is neither thine nor mine,
But in the hand of what is more than man,
Or in man's hand when man is more than man,
Let be thy wail and help thy fellow men,
And make thy gold thy vassal not thy king,
And fling free alms into the beggar's bowl,
And send the day into the darken'd heart;
Nor list for guerdon in the voice of men,
A dying echo from a falling wall;

Nor care—for Hunger hath the Evil eye—
To vex the noon with fiery gems, or fold
Thy presence in the silk of sumptuous looms;
Nor roll thy viands on a luscious tongue,
Nor drown thyself with flies in honied wine;
Nor thou be rageful, like a handled bee,
And lose thy life by usage of thy sting;
Nor harm an adder thro' the lust for harm,
Nor make a snail's horn shrink for wantonness;
And more—think well! Do-well will follow thought,
And in the fatal sequence of this world
An evil thought may soil thy children's blood;
But curb the beast would cast thee in the mire,
And leave the hot swamp of voluptuousness
A cloud between the Nameless and thyself,
And lay thine uphill shoulder to the wheel,
And climb the Mount of Blessing, whence, if thou
Look higher, then—perchance—thou mayest—beyond
A hundred ever-rising mountain lines,
And past the range of Night and Shadow—see
The high-heaven dawn of more than mortal day
Strike on the Mount of Vision!

So, farewell.

THE FLIGHT.

I.

Are you sleeping? have you forgotten? do not sleep,
my sister dear!
How *can* you sleep? the morning brings the day I
hate and fear;
The cock has crow'd already once, he crows before
his time;
Awake! the creeping glimmer steals, the hills are
white with rime.

II.

Ah, clasp me in your arms, sister, ah, fold me to your
breast!
Ah, let me weep my fill once more, and cry myself to
rest!
To rest? to rest and wake no more were better rest
for me,
Than to waken every morning to that face I loathe to
see:

III.

I envied your sweet slumber, all night so calm you lay,
The night was calm, the morn is calm, and like another day;
But I could wish yon moaning sea would rise and burst the shore,
And such a whirlwind blow these woods, as never blew before.

IV.

For, one by one, the stars went down across the gleaming pane,
And project after project rose, and all of them were vain;
The blackthorn-blossom fades and falls and leaves the bitter sloe,
The hope I catch at vanishes and youth is turn'd to woe.

V.

Come, speak a little comfort! all night I pray'd with tears,
And yet no comfort came to me, and now the morn appears,

When he will tear me from your side, who bought me
for his slave:
This father pays his debt with me, and weds me to
my grave.

VI.

What father, this or mine, was he, who, on that sum-
mer day
When I had fall'n from off the crag we clamber'd up
in play,
Found, fear'd me dead, and groan'd, and took and
kiss'd me, and again
He kiss'd me; and I loved him then; he *was* my
father then.

VII.

No father now, the tyrant vassal of a tyrant vice!
The Godless Jephtha vows his child . . . to one cast
of the dice.
These ancient woods, this Hall at last will go—per-
haps have gone,
Except his own meek daughter yield her life, heart,
soul to one—

VIII.

To one who knows I scorn him. O the formal mocking bow,
The cruel smile, the courtly phrase that masks his malice now—
But often in the sidelong eyes a gleam of all things ill—
It is not Love but Hate that weds a bride against her will;

IX.

Hate, that would pluck from this true breast the locket that I wear,
The precious crystal into which I braided Edwin's hair!
The love that keeps this heart alive beats on it night and day—
One golden curl, his golden gift, before he past away.

X.

He left us weeping in the woods; his boat was on the sand;
How slowly down the rocks he went, how loth to quit the land!

And all my life was darken'd, as I saw the white sail run,
And darken, up that lane of light into the setting sun.

XI.

How often have we watch'd the sun fade from us thro' the West,
And follow Edwin to those isles, those islands of the Blest!
Is *he* not there? would I were there, the friend, the bride, the wife,
With him, where summer never dies, with Love, the Sun of life!

XII.

O would I were in Edwin's arms—once more—to feel his breath
Upon my cheek—on Edwin's ship, with Edwin, ev'n in death,
Tho' all about the shuddering wreck the death-white sea should rave,
Or if lip were laid to lip on the pillows of the wave.

XIII.

Shall I take *him?* I kneel with *him?* I swear and swear forsworn

To love him most, whom most I loathe, to honour whom I scorn?
The Fiend would yell, the grave would yawn, my mother's ghost would rise—
To lie, to lie—in God's own house—the blackest of all lies!

XIV.

Why—rather than that hand in mine, tho' every pulse would freeze,
I'd sooner fold an icy corpse dead of some foul disease:
Wed him? I will not wed him, let them spurn me from the doors,
And I will wander till I die about the barren moors.

XV.

The dear, mad bride who stabb'd her bridegroom on her bridal night
If mad, then I am mad, but sane, if she were in the right.
My father's madness makes me mad—but words are only words!
I am not mad, not yet, not quite—There! listen how the birds

XVI.

Begin to warble yonder in the budding orchard trees!
The lark has past from earth to Heaven upon the morning breeze!
How gladly, were I one of those, how early would I wake!
And yet the sorrow that I bear is sorrow for *his* sake.

XVII.

They love their mates, to whom they sing; or else their songs, that meet
The morning with such music, would never be so sweet!
And tho' these fathers will not hear, the blessed Heavens are just,
And Love is fire, and burns the feet would trample it to dust.

XVIII.

A door was open'd in the house—who? who? my father sleeps!
A stealthy foot upon the stair! he—some one—this way creeps!

If he? yes, he . . . lurks, listens, fears his victim
may have fled—
He! where is some sharp-pointed thing? he comes,
and finds me dead.

XIX.

Not he, not yet! and time to act—but how my tem-
ples burn!
And idle fancies flutter me, I know not where to
turn;
Speak to me, sister; counsel me; this marriage must
not be.
You only know the love that makes the world a world
to me!

XX.

Our gentle mother, had *she* lived—but we were left
alone:
That other left us to ourselves; he cared not for his
own;
So all the summer long we roam'd in these wild
woods of ours,
My Edwin loved to call us then 'His two wild wood-
land flowers.'

XXI.

Wild flowers blowing side by side in God's free light and air,
Wild flowers of the secret woods, when Edwin found us there,
Wild woods in which we roved with him, and heard his passionate vow,
Wild woods in which we rove no more, if we be parted now!

XXII.

You will not leave me thus in grief to wander forth forlorn;
We never changed a bitter word, not once since we were born;
Our dying mother join'd our hands; she knew this father well;
She bad us love, like souls in Heaven, and now I fly from Hell,

XXIII.

And you with me; and we shall light upon some lonely shore,
Some lodge within the waste sea-dunes, and hear the waters roar,

And see the ships from out the West go dipping thro' the foam,
And sunshine on that sail at last which brings our Edwin home.

XXIV.

But look, the morning grows apace, and lights the old church-tower,
And lights the clock! the hand points five—O me—it strikes the hour—
I bide no more, I meet my fate, whatever ills betide!
Arise, my own true sister, come forth! the world is wide.

XXV.

And yet my heart is ill at ease, my eyes are dim with dew,
I seem to see a new-dug grave up yonder by the yew!
If we should never more return, but wander hand in hand
With breaking hearts, without a friend, and in a distant land.

XXVI.

O sweet, they tell me that the world is hard, and harsh of mind,

But can it be so hard, so harsh, as those that should be kind?
That matters not: let come what will; at last the end is sure,
And every heart that loves with truth is equal to endure.

TOMORROW.

I.

Her, that yer Honour was spakin' to? Whin, yer Honour? last year—
Standin' here be the bridge, when last yer Honour was here?
An' yer Honour ye gev her the top of the mornin', 'Tomorra' says she.
What did they call her, yer Honour? They call'd her Molly Magee.
An' yer Honour's the thrue ould blood that always manes to be kind,
But there's rason in all things, yer Honour, for Molly was out of her mind.

II.

Shure, an' meself remimbers wan night comin' down be the sthrame,
An' it seems to me now like a bit of yisther-day in a dhrame—

Here where yer Honour seen her—there was but a slip of a moon,
But I hard thim—Molly Magee wid her batchelor, Danny O'Roon—
'You've been takin' a dhrop o' the crathur' an' Danny says 'Troth, an' I been
Dhrinkin' yer health wid Shamus O'Shea at Katty's shebeen;[1]
But I must be lavin' ye soon.' 'Ochone are ye goin' away?'
'Goin' to cut the Sassenach whate' he says 'over the say'—
'An' whin will ye meet me agin?' an' I hard him 'Molly asthore,
I'll meet you agin tomorra,' says he, 'be the chapel-door.'
'An' whin are ye goin' to lave me?' 'O' Monday mornin'' says he;
'An' shure thin ye'll meet me tomorra?' 'Tomorra, tomorra, Machree!'
Thin Molly's ould mother, yer Honour, that had no likin' for Dan,
Call'd from her cabin an' tould her to come away from the man,
An' Molly Magee kem flyin' acrass me, as light as a lark,

[1] Grog-shop.

An' Dan stood there for a minute, an' thin wint into the dark.
But wirrah! the storm that night—the tundher, an' rain that fell,
An' the sthrames runnin' down at the back o' the glin 'ud 'a dhrownded Hell.

III.

But airth was at pace nixt mornin', an' Hiven in its glory smiled,
As the Holy Mother o' Glory that smiles at her sleepin' child—
Ethen—she stept an the chapel-green, an' she turn'd herself roun'
Wid a diamond dhrop in her eye, for Danny was not to be foun',
An' many's the time that I watch'd her at mass lettin' down the tear,
For the Divil a Danny was there, yer Honour, for forty year.

IV.

Och, Molly Magee, wid the red o' the rose an' the white o' the May,
An' yer hair as black as the night, an' yer eyes as bright as the day!

Achora, yer laste little whishper was sweet as the lilt of a bird!

Acushla, ye set me heart batin' to music wid ivery word!

An' sorra the Queen wid her sceptre in sich an illigant han',

An' the fall of yer foot in the dance was as light as snow an the lan',

An' the sun kem out of a cloud whiniver ye walkt in the shtreet,

An' Shamus O'Shea was yer shadda, an' laid himself undher yer feet,

An' I loved ye meself wid a heart and a half, me darlin', and he

'Ud 'a shot his own sowl dead for a kiss of ye, Molly Magee.

V.

But shure we wor betther frinds whin I crack'd his skull for her sake,

An' he ped me back wid the best he could give at ould Donovan's wake—

For the boys wor about her agin whin Dan didn't come to the fore,

An' Shamus along wid the rest, but she put thim all to the door.

An', afther, I thried her meself av the bird 'ud come to me call,
But Molly, begorrah, 'ud listhen to naither at all, at all.

VI.

An' her nabours an' frinds 'ud consowl an' condowl wid her, airly and late,
'Your Danny,' they says, 'niver crasst over say to the Sassenach whate;
He's gone to the States, aroon, an' he's married another wife,
An' ye'll niver set eyes an the face of the thraithur agin in life!
An' to dhrame of a married man, death alive, is a mortial sin.'
But Molly says 'I'd his hand-promise, an' shure he'll meet me agin.'

VII.

An' afther her paärints had inter'd glory, an' both in wan day,
She began to spake to herself, the crathur, and whisper, an' say
'Tomorra, Tomorra!' an' Father Molowny he tuk her in han',

'Molly, you're manin',' he says, 'me dear, av I undherstan',
That ye'll meet your paärints agin an' yer Danny O'Roon afore God
Wid his blessed Marthyrs an' Saints;' an' she gev him a frindly nod,
'Tomorra, Tomorra,' she says, an' she didn't intind to desave,
But her wits wor dead, an' her hair was as white as the snow an a grave.

VIII.

Arrah now, here last month they wor diggin' the bog, an' they foun'
Dhrownded in black bog-wather a corp lyin' undher groun'.

IX.

Yer Honour's own agint, he says to me wanst, at Katty's shebeen,
'The Divil take all the black lan', for a blessin' 'ud come wid the green!'
An' where 'ud the poor man, thin, cut his bit o' turf for the fire?
But och! bad scran to the bogs whin they swallies the man intire!

An' sorra the bog that's in Hiven wid all the light an' the glow,
An' there's hate enough, shure, widout *thim* in the Divil's kitchen below.

X.

Thim ould blind nagers in Agypt, I hard his Riverence say,
Could keep their haithen kings in the flesh for the Jidgemint day,
An', faix, be the piper o' Moses, they kep the cat an' the dog,
But it 'ud 'a been aisier work av they lived be an Irish bog.

XI.

How-an-iver they laid this body they foun' an the grass
Be the chapel-door, an' the people 'ud see it that wint into mass—
But a frish gineration had riz, an' most of the ould was few,
An' I didn't know him meself, an' nōne of the parish knew.

XII.

But Molly kem limpin' up wid her stick, she was lamed iv a knee,
Thin a slip of a gossoon call'd, 'Div ye know him, Molly Magee?'
An' she stood up strait as the Queen of the world—she lifted her head—
'He said he would meet me tomorra!' an' dhropt down dead an the dead.

XIII.

Och, Molly, we thought, machree, ye would start back agin into life,
Whin we laid yez, aich be aich, at yer wake like husban' an' wife.
Sorra the dhry eye thin but was wet for the frinds that was gone!
Sorra the silent throat but we hard it cryin' 'Ochone!'
An' Shamus O'Shea that has now ten childer, hansome an' tall,
Him an' his childer wor keenin' as if he had lost thim all.

XIV.

Thin his Riverence buried thim both in wan grave be the dead boor-tree,[1]
The young man Danny O'Roon wid his ould woman, Molly Magee.

XV.

May all the flowers o' Jeroosilim blossom an' spring from the grass,
Imbrashin' an' kissin' aich other—as ye did—over yer Crass!
An' the lark fly out o' the flowers wid his song to the Sun an' the Moon,
An' tell thim in Hiven about Molly Magee an' her Danny O'Roon,
Till Holy St. Pether gets up wid his kays an' opens the gate!
An' shure, be the Crass, that's betther nor cuttin' the Sassenach whate
To be there wid the Blessed Mother, an' Saints an' Marthyrs galore,
An' singin' yer 'Aves' an' 'Pathers' for iver an' ivermore.

[1] Elder-tree.

XVI.

An' now that I tould yer Honour whativer I hard an' seen,
Yer Honour 'll give me a thrifle to dhrink yer health in potheen.

THE SPINSTER'S SWEET-ARTS.

I.

Milk for my sweet-arts, Bess! fur it mun be the time about now
When Molly cooms in fro' the far-end close wi' her paäils fro' the cow.
Eh! tha be new to the plaäce—thou'rt gaäpin'—doesn't tha see
I calls 'em arter the fellers es once was sweet upo' me?

II.

Naäy to be sewer it be past 'er time. What maäkes 'er sa laäte?
Goä to the laäne at the back, an' looök thruf Maddison's gaäte!

III.

Sweet-arts! Molly belike may 'a lighted to-night upo' one.

Sweet-arts! thanks to the Lord that I niver not listen'd to noän!
So I sits i' my oän armchair wi' my oän kettle theere o' the hob,
An' Tommy the fust, an' Tommy the second, an' Steevie an' Rob.

IV.

Rob, coom oop 'ere o' my knee. Thou sees that i' spite o' the men
I 'a kep' thruf thick an' thin my two 'oonderd a-year to mysen;
Yis! thaw tha call'd me es pretty es ony lass i' the Shere,
An' thou be es pretty a Tabby, but Robby I seed thruf ya theere.

V.

Feyther 'ud saäy I wur ugly es sin, an' I beänt not vaäin,
But I niver wur downright hugly, thaw soom 'ud 'a thowt ma plaäin,
An' I wasn't sa plaäin i' pink ribbons, ye said I wur pretty i' pinks,
An' I liked to 'ear it I did, but I beänt sich a fool as ye thinks;

Ye was stroäkin ma down wi' the 'air, as I be a-stroäkin o' you,
But whiniver I looök'd i' the glass I wur sewer that it couldn't be true;
Niver wur pretty, not I, but ye knaw'd it wur pleasant to 'ear,
Thaw it warn't not me es wur pretty, but my two 'oonderd a-year.

VI.

D'ya mind the murnin' when we was a-walkin' togither, an' stood
By the claäy'd-oop pond, that the foälk be sa scared at, i' Gigglesby wood,
Wheer the poor wench drowndid hersen, black Sal, es 'ed been disgraäced?
An' I feel'd thy arm es I stood wur a-creeäpin about my waäist;
An' me es wur allus afear'd of a man's gittin' ower fond,
I sidled awaäy an' awaäy till I plumpt foot fust i' the pond;
And, Robby, I niver 'a liked tha sa well, as I did that daäy,
Fur tha joompt in thysen, an' tha hoickt my feet wi' a flop fro' the claäy.

Ay, stick oop thy back, an' set oop thy taäil, tha may
gie ma a kiss,
Fur I walk'd wi' tha all the way hoam an' wur niver
sa nigh saäyin' Yis.
But wa boäth was i' sich a clat we was shaämed to
cross Gigglesby Greeän,
Fur a cat may looök at a king thou knaws but the cat
mun be cleän.
Sa we boäth on us kep out o' sight o' the winders o'
Gigglesby Hinn—
Naäy, but the claws o' tha! quiet! they pricks cleän
thruf to the skin—
An' wa boäth slinkt 'oäm by the brokken shed i' the
laäne at the back,
Wheer the poodle runn'd at tha once, an' thou runn'd
oop o' the thack;
An' tha squeedg'd my 'and i' the shed, fur theere we
was forced to 'ide,
Fur I seed that Steevie wur coomin', and one o' the
Tommies beside.

VII.

Theere now, what art'a mewin at, Steevie? for owt I
can tell—
Robby wur fust to be sewer, or I mowt 'a liked tha
as well.

VIII.

But, Robby, I thowt o' tha all the while I wur chaäng-
in' my gown,
An' I thowt shall I chaänge my staäte? but, O Lord,
upo' coomin' down—
My bran-new carpet es fresh es a midder o' flowers i'
Maäy—
Why 'edn't tha wiped thy shoes? it wur clatted all
ower wi' claäy.
An' I could 'a cried ammost, fur I seed that it
couldn't be,
An' Robby I gied tha a raätin that sattled thy coortin
o' me.
An' Molly an' me was agreed, as we was a-cleänin'
the floor,
That a man be a durty thing an' a trouble an' plague
wi' indoor.
But I rued it arter a bit, fur I stuck to tha more na
the rest,
But I couldn't 'a lived wi' a man an' I knaws it be
all fur the best.

IX.

Naäy—let ma stroäk tha down till I maäkes tha es
smooth es silk,

But if I 'ed married tha, Robby, thou'd not 'a been worth thy milk,
Thou'd niver 'a cotch'd ony mice but 'a left me the work to do,
And 'a taäen to the bottle beside, so es all that I 'ears be true;
But I loovs tha to maäke thysen 'appy, an' soa purr awaäy, my dear,
Thou 'ed wellnigh purr'd ma awaäy fro' my oän two 'oonderd a-year.

x.

Sweärin agean, you Toms, as ye used to do twelve years sin'!
Ye niver 'eärd Steevie sweär 'cep' it wur at a dog coomin' in.
An' boath o' ye mun be fools to be hallus a-shawin' your claws,
Fur I niver cared nothink for neither—an' one o' ye deäd ye knaws!
Coom giv hoäver then, weant ye? I warrant ye soom fine daäy—
Theere, lig down—I shall hev to gie one or tother awaäy.
Can't ye taäke pattern by Steevie? ye shant hev a drop fro' the paäil.

Steevie be right good manners bang thruf to the tip o' the taäil.

XI.

Robby, git down wi'tha, wilt tha? let Steevie coom oop o' my knee.

Steevie, my lad, thou 'ed very nigh been the Steevie fur me!

Robby wur fust to be sewer, 'e wur burn an' bred i' the 'ouse,

But thou be es 'ansom a tabby es iver patted a mouse.

XII.

An' I beänt not vaäin, but I knaws I 'ed led tha a quieter life

Nor her wi' the hepitaph yonder! "A faäithful an' loovin' wife!"

An' 'cos o' thy farm by the beck, an' thy windmill oop o' the croft,

Tha thowt tha would marry ma, did tha? but that wur a bit ower soft,

Thaw thou was es soäber es daäy, wi' a niced red faäce, an' es cleän

Es a shillin' fresh fro' the mint wi' a bran-new 'eäd o' the Queeän,

An' thy farmin' es cleän es thysen', fur, Steevie, tha kep' it sa neät
That I niver not spied sa much es a poppy along wi' the wheät,
An' the wool of a thistle a-flyin' an' seeädin' tha haäted to see;
'Twur es bad es a battle-twig[1] 'ere i' my oän blue chaumber to me.
Ay, roob thy whiskers ageän ma, fur I could 'a taäen to tha well,
But fur thy bairns, poor Steevie, a bouncin' boy an' a gell.

XIII.

An' thou was es fond o' thy bairns es I be mysen o' my cats,
But I niver not wish'd fur childer, I hevn't naw likin' fur brats;
Pretty anew when ya dresses 'em oop, an' they goäs fur a walk,
Or sits wi' their 'ands afoor 'em, an' doesn't not 'inder the talk!
But their bottles o' pap, an' their mucky bibs, an' the clats an' the clouts,
An' their mashin' their toys to pieäces an' maäkin' ma deäf wi' their shouts,

[1] Earwig.

An' hallus a-joompin' about ma as if they was set upo' springs,
An' a haxin' ma hawkard questions, an' saäyin' on-decent things,
An' a-callin' ma 'hugly' mayhap to my faäce, or a teärin' my gown—
Dear! dear! dear! I mun part them Tommies—Steevie git down.

XIV.

Ye be wuss nor the men-tommies, you. I tell'd ya, na moor o' that!
Tom, lig theere o' the cushion, an' tother Tom 'ere o' the mat.

XV.

Theere! I ha' master'd *them!* Hed I married the Tommies—O Lord,
To loove an' obaäy the Tommies! I couldn't 'a stuck by my word.
To be horder'd about, an' waäked, when Molly 'd put out the light,
By a man coomin' in wi' a hiccup at ony hour o' the night!
An' the taäble staäin'd wi' 'is aäle, an' the mud o' 'is boots o' the stairs,

An' the stink o' 'is pipe i' the 'ouse, an' the mark o' 'is 'eäd o' the chairs!
An' noän o' my four sweet-arts 'ud 'a let me 'a hed my oän waäy,
Sa I likes 'em best wi' taäils when they 'evn't a word to saäy.

XVI.

An' I sits i' my oän little parlour, an' sarved by my oän little lass,
Wi' my oän little garden outside, an' my oän bed o' sparrow-grass,
An' my oän door-poorch wi' the woodbine an' jessmine a-dressin' it greeän,
An' my oän fine Jackman i' purple a roäbin' the 'ouse like a Queeän.

XVII.

An' the little gells bobs to ma hoffens es I be abroad i' the laänes,
When I goäs fur to coomfut the poor es be down wi' their haäches an' their paäins:
An' a haäf-pot o' jam, or a mossel o' meät when it beänt too dear,
They maäkes ma a graäter Laädy nor 'er i' the mansion theer,

Hes 'es hallus to hax of a man how much to spare or
to spend;
An' a spinster I be an' I will be, if soä pleäse God,
to the hend.

XVIII.

Mew! mew!—Bess wi' the milk! what ha maäde our
Molly sa laäte?
It should 'a been 'ere by seven, an' theere—it be
strikin' height—
'Cushie wur craäzed fur 'er cauf' well—I 'eärd 'er a
maäkin' 'er moän,
An' I thowt to mysen 'thank God that I hevn't naw
cauf o' my oän.'
Theere!
Set it down!
Now Robby!
You Tommies shall waäit to-night
Till Robby an' Steevie 'es 'ed their lap—an' it sarves
ye right.

LOCKSLEY HALL

SIXTY YEARS AFTER.

LATE, my grandson! half the morning have I paced these sandy tracts,
Watch'd again the hollow ridges roaring into cataracts,

Wander'd back to living boyhood while I heard the curlews call,
I myself so close on death, and death itself in Locksley Hall.

So—your happy suit was blasted—she the faultless, the divine;
And you liken—boyish babble—this boy-love of yours with mine.

I myself have often babbled doubtless of a foolish past;
Babble, babble; our old England may go down in babble at last.

'Curse him!' curse your fellow-victim? call him
dotard in your rage?
Eyes that lured a doting boyhood well might fool a
dotard's age.

Jilted for a wealthier! wealthier? yet perhaps she was
not wise;
I remember how you kiss'd the miniature with those
sweet eyes.

In the hall there hangs a painting—Amy's arms about
my neck—
Happy children in a sunbeam sitting on the ribs of
wreck.

In my life there was a picture, she that clasp'd my
neck had flown;
I was left within the shadow sitting on the wreck
alone.

Yours has been a slighter ailment, will you sicken for
her sake?
You, not you! your modern amourist is of easier,
earthlier make.

Amy loved me, Amy fail'd me, Amy was a timid
child;

But your Judith—but your worldling—*she* had never
driven me wild.

She that holds the diamond necklace dearer than the
golden ring,
She that finds a winter sunset fairer than a morn of
Spring.

She that in her heart is brooding on his briefer lease
of life,
While she vows 'till death shall part us,' she the would-
be-widow wife.

She the worldling born of worldlings—father, mother
—be content,
Ev'n the homely farm can teach us there is something
in descent.

Yonder in that chapel, slowly sinking now into the
ground,
Lies the warrior, my forefather, with his feet upon
the hound.

Cross'd! for once he sail'd the sea to crush the Mos-
lem in his pride;
Dead the warrior, dead his glory, dead the cause in
which he died.

Yet how often I and Amy in the mouldering aisle
have stood,
Gazing for one pensive moment on that founder of
our blood.

There again I stood to-day, and where of old we knelt
in prayer,
Close beneath the casement crimson with the shield
of Locksley—there,

All in white Italian marble, looking still as if she
smiled,
Lies my Amy dead in child-birth, dead the mother,
dead the child.

Dead—and sixty years ago, and dead her aged hus-
band now—
I this old white-headed dreamer stoopt and kiss'd her
marble brow.

Gone the fires of youth, the follies, furies, curses,
passionate tears,
Gone like fires and floods and earthquakes of the
planet's dawning years.

Fires that shook me once, but now to silent ashes
fall'n away.

Cold upon the dead volcano sleeps the gleam of dying day.

Gone the tyrant of my youth, and mute below the chancel stones,
All his virtues—I forgive them—black in white above his bones.

Gone the comrades of my bivouac, some in fight against the foe,
Some thro' age and slow diseases, gone as all on earth will go.

Gone with whom for forty years my life in golden sequence ran,
She with all the charm of woman, she with all the breadth of man,

Strong in will and rich in wisdom, Edith, yet so lowly-sweet,
Woman to her inmost heart, and woman to her tender feet,

Very woman of very woman, nurse of ailing body and mind,
She that link'd again the broken chain that bound me to my kind.

Here to-day was Amy with me, while I wander'd down
the coast,
Near us Edith's holy shadow, smiling at the slighter
ghost.

Gone our sailor son thy father, Leonard early lost at
sea;
Thou alone, my boy, of Amy's kin and mine art left
to me.

Gone thy tender-natured mother, wearying to be left
alone,
Pining for the stronger heart that once had beat beside
her own.

Truth, for Truth is Truth, he worshipt, being true as
he was brave;
Good, for Good is Good, he follow'd, yet he look'd
beyond the grave,

Wiser there than you, that crowning barren Death as
lord of all,
Deem this over-tragic drama's closing curtain is the
pall!

Beautiful was death in him, who saw the death, but
kept the deck,

Saving women and their babes, and sinking with the
sinking wreck,

Gone for ever! Ever? no—for since our dying race
began,
Ever, ever, and for ever was the leading light of
man.

Those that in barbarian burials kill'd the slave, and
slew the wife,
Felt within themselves the sacred passion of the
second life.

Indian warriors dream of ampler hunting grounds be-
yond the night;
Ev'n the black Australian dying hopes he shall return,
a white.

Truth for truth, and good for good! The Good, the
True, the Pure, the Just—
Take the charm 'For ever' from them, and they crum-
ble into dust.

Gone the cry of 'Forward, Forward,' lost within a
growing gloom;
Lost, or only heard in silence from the silence of a
tomb.

Half the marvels of my morning, triumphs over time and space,
Staled by frequence, shrunk by usage into commonest commonplace!

'Forward' rang the voices then, and of the many mine was one.
Let us hush this cry of 'Forward' till ten thousand years have gone.

Far among the vanish'd races, old Assyrian kings would flay
Captives whom they caught ... battle—iron-hearted victors they.

Ages after, while in Asia, he that led the wild Moguls,
Timur built his ghastly tower of eighty thousand human skulls,

Then, and here in Edward's time, an age of noblest English names,
Christian conquerors took and flung the conquer'd Christian into flames.

Love your enemy, bless your haters, said the Greatest of the great;

Christian love among the Churches look'd the twin
of heathen hate.

From the golden alms of Blessing man had coin'd
himself a curse:
Rome of Cæsar, Rome of Peter, which was crueller?
which was worse?

France had shown a light to all men, preach'd a
Gospel, all men's good;
Celtic Demos rose a Demon, shriek'd and slaked the
light with blood.

Hope was ever on her mountain, watching till the
day begun—
Crown'd with sunlight—over darkness—from the still
unrisen sun.

Have we grown at last beyond the passions of the
primal clan?
'Kill your enemy, for you hate him,' still, 'your
enemy' was a man.

Have we sunk below them? peasants maim the help-
less horse, and drive
Innocent cattle under thatch, and burn the kindlier
brutes alive.

Brutes, the brutes are not your wrongers—burnt at
midnight, found at morn,
Twisted hard in mortal agony with their offspring,
born-unborn,

Clinging to the silent mother! Are we devils? are
we men?
Sweet St. Francis of Assisi, would that he were here
again,

He that in his Catholic wholeness used to call the
very flowers
Sisters, brothers—and the beasts—whose pains are
hardly less than ours!

Chaos, Cosmos! Cosmos, Chaos! who can tell how
all will end?
Read the wide world's annals, you, and take their
wisdom for your friend.

Hope the best, but hold the Present fatal daughter of
the Past,
Shape your heart to front the hour, but dream not that
the hour will last.

Ay, if dynamite and revolver leave you courage to be
wise:

When was age so cramm'd with menace? madness? written, spoken lies?

Envy wears the mask of Love, and, laughing sober fact to scorn,
Cries to Weakest as to Strongest, 'Ye are equals, equal-born.'

Equal-born? O yes, if yonder hill be level with the flat.
Charm us, Orator, till the Lion look no larger than the Cat,

Till the Cat thro' that mirage of overheated language loom
Larger than the Lion,—Demos end in working its own doom.

Russia bursts our Indian barrier, shall we fight her? shall we yield?
Pause! before you sound the trumpet, hear the voices from the field.

Those three hundred millions under one Imperial sceptre now,
Shall we hold them? shall we loose them? take the suffrage of the plow.

Nay, but these would feel and follow Truth if only you and you,
Rivals of realm-ruining party, when you speak were wholly true.

Plowmen, Shepherds, have I found, and more than once, and still could find,
Sons of God, and kings of men in utter nobleness of mind,

Truthful, trustful, looking upward to the practised hustings-liar;
So the Higher wields the Lower, while the Lower is the Higher.

Here and there a cotter's babe is royal-born by right divine;
Here and there my lord is lower than his oxen or his swine.

Chaos, Cosmos! Cosmos, Chaos! once again the sickening game;
Freedom, free to slay herself, and dying while they shout her name.

Step by step we gain'd a freedom known to Europe, known to all;

Step by step we rose to greatness,—thro' the tongue-
sters we may fall.

You that woo the Voices—tell them 'old experience
is a fool,'
Teach your flatter'd kings that only those who cannot
read can rule.

Pluck the mighty from their seat, but set no meek
ones in their place;
Pillory Wisdom in your markets, pelt your offal at her
face.

Tumble Nature heel o'er head, and, yelling with the
yelling street,
Set the feet above the brain and swear the brain is in
the feet.

Bring the old dark ages back without the faith, with-
out the hope,
Break the State, the Church, the Throne, and roll
their ruins down the slope.

Authors—essayist, atheist, novelist, realist, rhyme-
ster, play your part,
Paint the mortal shame of nature with the living hues
of Art.

Rip your brothers' vices open, strip your own foul passions bare;
Down with Reticence, down with Reverence—forward—naked—let them stare.

Feed the budding rose of boyhood with the drainage of your sewer;
Send the drain into the fountain, lest the stream should issue pure.

Set the maiden fancies wallowing in the troughs of Zolaism,—
Forward, forward, ay and backward, downward too into the abysm.

Do your best to charm the worst, to lower the rising race of men;
Have we risen from out the beast, then back into the beast again?

Only 'dust to dust' for me that sicken at your lawless din,
Dust in wholesome old-world dust before the newer world begin.

Heated am I? you—you wonder—well, it scarce becomes mine age—

Patience! let the dying actor mouth his last upon the stage.

Cries of unprogressive dotage ere the dotard fall asleep?
Noises of a current narrowing, not the music of a deep?

Ay, for doubtless I am old, and think gray thoughts, for I am gray:
After all the stormy changes shall we find a changeless May?

After madness, after massacre, Jacobism and Jacquerie,
Some diviner force to guide us thro' the days I shall not see?

When the schemes and all the systems, Kingdoms and Republics fall,
Something kindlier, higher, holier—all for each and each for all?

All the full-brain, half-brain races, led by Justice, Love, and Truth;
All the millions one at length with all the visions of my youth?

All diseases quench'd by Science, no man halt, or deaf or blind;
Stronger ever born of weaker, lustier body, larger mind?

Earth at last a warless world, a single race, a single tongue—
I have seen her far away—for is not Earth as yet so young?—

Every tiger madness muzzled, every serpent passion kill'd,
Every grim ravine a garden, every blazing desert till'd,

Robed in universal harvest up to either pole she smiles,
Universal ocean softly washing all her warless Isles.

Warless? when her tens are thousands, and her thousands millions, then—
All her harvest all too narrow—who can fancy warless men?

Warless? war will die out late then. Will it ever? late or soon?

Can it, till this outworn earth be dead as yon dead
world the moon?

Dead the new astronomy calls her. . . . On this day
and at this hour,
In this gap between the sandhills, whence you see the
Locksley tower,

Here we met, our latest meeting—Amy—sixty years
ago—
She and I—the moon was falling greenish thro' a rosy
glow,

Just above the gateway tower, and even where you
see her now—
Here we stood and claspt each other, swore the seem-
ing-deathless vow. . . .

Dead, but how her living glory lights the hall, the
dune, the grass!
Yet the moonlight is the sunlight, and the sun himself
will pass.

Venus near her! smiling downward at this earthlier
earth of ours,
Closer on the Sun, perhaps a world of never fading
flowers.

Hesper, whom the poet call'd the Bringer home of
all good things.
All good things may move in Hesper, perfect peoples,
perfect kings.

Hesper—Venus—were we native to that splendour or
in Mars,
We should see the Globe we groan in, fairest of their
evening stars.

Could we dream of wars and carnage, craft and mad-
ness, lust and spite,
Roaring London, raving Paris, in that point of peace-
ful light?

Might we not in glancing heavenward on a star so
silver-fair,
Yearn, and clasp the hands and murmur, 'Would to
God that we were there'?

Forward, backward, backward, forward, in the im-
measurable sea,
Sway'd by vaster ebbs and flows than can be known to
you or me.

All the suns—are these but symbols of innumerable
man,

Man or Mind that sees a shadow of the planner or
the plan?

Is there evil but on earth? or pain in every peopled
sphere?
Well be grateful for the sounding watchword 'Evolu-
tion' here.

Evolution ever climbing after some ideal good,
And Reversion ever dragging Evolution in the mud.

What are men that He should heed us? cried the king
of sacred song;
Insects of an hour, that hourly work their brother
insect wrong,

While the silent Heavens roll, and Suns along their
fiery way,
All their planets whirling round them, flash a million
miles a day.

Many an Æon moulded earth before her highest,
man, was born,
Many an Æon too may pass when earth is manless
and forlorn,

Earth so huge, and yet so bounded—pools of salt, and
plots of land—

Shallow skin of green and azure—chains of mountain,
grains of sand!

Only That which made us, meant us to be mightier
by and by,
Set the sphere of all the boundless Heavens within
the human eye,

Sent the shadow of Himself, the boundless, thro' the
human soul;
Boundless inward, in the atom, boundless outward, in
the Whole.

* * * * * * * *

Here is Locksley Hall, my grandson, here the lion-
guarded gate.
Not to-night in Locksley Hall—to-morrow—you, you
come so late.

Wreck'd—your train—or all but wreck'd? a shat-
ter'd wheel? a vicious boy!
Good, this forward, you that preach it, is it well to
wish you joy?

Is it well that while we range with Science, glorying
in the Time,
City children soak and blacken soul and sense in city
slime?

There among the glooming alleys Progress halts on palsied feet,
Crime and hunger cast our maidens by the thousand on the street.

There the Master scrimps his haggard sempstress of her daily bread,
There a single sordid attic holds the living and the dead.

There the smouldering fire of fever creeps across the rotted floor,
And the crowded couch of incest in the warrens of the poor.

Nay, your pardon, cry you 'forward,' yours are hope and youth, but I—
Eighty winters leave the dog too lame to follow with the cry,

Lame and old, and past his time, and passing now into the night;
Yet I would the rising race were half as eager for the light.

Light the fading gleam of Even? light the glimmer of the dawn?

Aged eyes may take the growing glimmer for the
gleam withdrawn.

Far away beyond her myriad coming changes earth
will be
Something other than the wildest modern guess of you
and me.

Earth may reach her earthly-worst, or if she gain her
earthly-best,
Would she find her human offspring this ideal man at
rest?

Forward then, but still remember how the course of
Time will swerve,
Crook and turn upon itself in many a backward
streaming curve.

Not the Hall to-night, my grandson! Death and
Silence hold their own.
Leave the Master in the first dark hour of his last
sleep alone.

Worthier soul was he than I am, sound and honest,
rustic Squire,
Kindly landlord, boon companion—youthful jealousy
is a liar.

Cast the poison from your bosom, oust the madness
from your brain.
Let the trampled serpent show you that you have not
lived in vain.

Youthful! youth and age are scholars yet but in the
lower school,
Nor is he the wisest man who never proved himself a
fool.

Yonder lies our young sea-village—Art and Grace are
less and less:
Science grows and Beauty dwindles—roofs of slated
hideousness!

There is one old Hostel left us where they swing the
Locksley shield,
Till the peasant cow shall butt the 'Lion passant'
from his field.

Poor old Heraldry, poor old History, poor old Poetry,
passing hence,
In the common deluge drowning old political com-
mon-sense!

Poor old voice of eighty crying after voices that have
fled!

All I loved are vanish'd voices, all my steps are on the dead.

All the world is ghost to me, and as the phantom disappears,
Forward far and far from here is all the hope of eighty years.

* * * * * * * *

In this Hostel—I remember—I repent it o'er his grave—
Like a clown—by chance he met me—I refused the hand he gave.

From that casement where the trailer mantles all the mouldering bricks—
I was then in early boyhood, Edith but a child of six—

While I shelter'd in this archway from a day of driving showers—
Peept the winsome face of Edith like a flower among the flowers.

Here to-night! the Hall to-morrow, when they toll the Chapel bell!
Shall I hear in one dark room a wailing, 'I have loved thee well.'

Then a peal that shakes the portal—one has come to
claim his bride,
Her that shrank, and put me from her, shriek'd, and
started from my side—

Silent echoes! You, my Leonard, use and not abuse
your day,
Move among your people, know them, follow him who
led the way,

Strove for sixty widow'd years to help his homelier
brother men,
Served the poor, and built the cottage, raised the
school, and drain'd the fen.

Hears he now the Voice that wrong'd him? who shall
swear it cannot be?
Earth would never touch her worst, were one in fifty
such as he.

Ere she gain her Heavenly-best, a God must mingle
with the game:
Nay, there may be those about us whom we neither
see nor name,

Felt within us as ourselves, the Powers of Good, the
Powers of Ill,

Strowing balm, or shedding poison in the fountains
of the Will.

Follow you the Star that lights a desert pathway,
yours or mine.
Forward, till you see the highest Human Nature is
divine.

Follow Light, and do the Right—for man can half-
control his doom—
Till you find the deathless Angel seated in the vacant
tomb.

Forward, let the stormy moment fly and mingle with
the Past.
I that loathed, have come to love him. Love will
conquer at the last.

Gone at eighty, mine own age, and I and you will
bear the pall;
Then I leave thee Lord and Master, latest Lord of
Locksley Hall.

PROLOGUE TO GENERAL HAMLEY.

Our birches yellowing and from each
The light leaf falling fast,
While squirrels from our fiery beech
Were bearing off the mast,
You came, and look'd and loved the view
Long-known and loved by me,
Green Sussex fading into blue
With one gray glimpse of sea;
And, gazing from this height alone,
We spoke of what had been
Most marvellous in the wars your own
Crimean eyes had seen;
And now—like old-world inns that take
Some warrior for a sign
That therewithin a guest may make
True cheer with honest wine—
Because you heard the lines I read
Nor utter'd word of blame,
I dare without your leave to head
These rhymings with your name,

Who know you but as one of those
  I fain would meet again,
Yet know you, as your England knows
  That you and all your men
Were soldiers to her heart's desire,
  When, in the vanish'd year,
You saw the league-long rampart-fire
  Flare from Tel-el-Kebir
Thro' darkness, and the foe was driven,
  And Wolseley overthrew
Arâbi, and the stars in heaven
  Paled, and the glory grew.

THE CHARGE OF THE HEAVY BRIGADE AT BALACLAVA.

October 25, 1854.

I.

The charge of the gallant three hundred, the Heavy Brigade!
Down the hill, down the hill, thousands of Russians,
Thousands of horsemen, drew to the valley—and stay'd;
For Scarlett and Scarlett's three hundred were riding by
When the points of the Russian lances arose in the sky;
And he call'd 'Left wheel into line!' and they wheel'd and obey'd.
Then he look'd at the host that had halted he knew not why,
And he turn'd half round, and he bad his trumpeter sound
To the charge, and he rode on ahead, as he waved his blade

To the gallant three hundred whose glory will never die—
'Follow,' and up the hill, up the hill, up the hill,
Follow'd the Heavy Brigade.

II.

The trumpet, the gallop, the charge, and the might of the fight!
Thousands of horsemen had gather'd there on the height,
With a wing push'd out to the left and a wing to the right,
And who shall escape if they close? but he dash'd up alone
Thro' the great gray slope of men,
Sway'd his sabre, and held his own
Like an Englishman there and then;
All in a moment follow'd with force
Three that were next in their fiery course,
Wedged themselves in between horse and horse,
Fought for their lives in the narrow gap they had made—
Four amid thousands! and up the hill, up the hill,
Gallopt the gallant three hundred, the Heavy Brigade.

III.

Fell like a cannonshot,
Burst like a thunderbolt,
Crash'd like a hurricane,
Broke thro' the mass from below,
Drove thro' the midst of the foe,
Plunged up and down, to and fro,
Rode flashing blow upon blow,
Brave Inniskillens and Greys
Whirling their sabres in circles of light!
And some of us, all in amaze,
Who were held for a while from the fight,
And were only standing at gaze,
When the dark-muffled Russian crowd
Folded its wings from the left and the right,
And roll'd them around like a cloud,—
O mad for the charge and the battle were we,
When our own good redcoats sank from sight,
Like drops of blood in a dark-gray sea,
And we turn'd to each other, whispering, all dismay'd,
'Lost are the gallant three hundred of Scarlett's Brigade!'

IV.

'Lost one and all' were the words
Mutter'd in our dismay;

But they rode like Victors and Lords
Thro' the forest of lances and swords
In the heart of the Russian hordes,
They rode, or they stood at bay—
Struck with the sword-hand and slew,
Down with the bridle-hand drew
The foe from the saddle and threw
Underfoot there in the fray—
Ranged like a storm or stood like a rock
In the wave of a stormy day;
Till suddenly shock upon shock
Stagger'd the mass from without,
Drove it in wild disarray,
For our men gallopt up with a cheer and a shout,
And the foeman surged, and waver'd, and reel'd
Up the hill, up the hill, up the hill, out of the field,
And over the brow and away.

v.

Glory to each and to all, and the charge that they made!
Glory to all the three hundred, and all the Brigade!

NOTE.—The 'three hundred' of the 'Heavy Brigade' who made this famous charge were the Scots Greys and the 2nd squadron of Inniskillings; the remainder of the 'Heavy Brigade' subsequently dashing up to their support.

The 'three' were Scarlett's aide-de-camp, Elliot, and the trumpeter and Shegog the orderly, who had been close behind him.

EPILOGUE.

IRENE.

NOT this way will you set your name
A star among the stars.

POET.

What way?

IRENE.

You praise when you should blame
The barbarism of wars.
A juster epoch has begun.

POET.

Yet tho' this cheek be gray,
And that bright hair the modern sun,
Those eyes the blue to-day,
You wrong me, passionate little friend.
I would that wars should cease,
I would the globe from end to end
Might sow and reap in peace,

And some new Spirit o'erbear the old,
Or Trade re-frain the Powers
From war with kindly links of gold,
Or Love with wreaths of flowers.
Slav, Teuton, Kelt, I count them all
My friends and brother souls,
With all the peoples, great and small,
That wheel between the poles.
But since, our mortal shadow, Ill
To waste this earth began—
Perchance from some abuse of Will
In worlds before the man
Involving ours—he needs must fight
To make true peace his own,
He needs must combat might with might,
Or Might would rule alone;
And who loves War for War's own sake
Is fool, or crazed, or worse;
But let the patriot-soldier take
His meed of fame in verse;
Nay—tho' that realm were in the wrong
For which her warriors bleed,
It still were right to crown with song
The warrior's noble deed—
A crown the Singer hopes may last,
For so the deed endures;
But Song will vanish in the Vast;

And that large phrase of yours
'A Star among the stars,' my dear,
Is girlish talk at best;
For dare we dally with the sphere
As he did half in jest,
Old Horace? 'I will strike' said he
'The stars with head sublime,'
But scarce could see, as now we see,
The man in Space and Time,
So drew perchance a happier lot
Than ours, who rhyme to-day.
The fires that arch this dusky dot—
Yon myriad-worlded way—
The vast sun-clusters' gather'd blaze,
World-isles in lonely skies,
Whole heavens within themselves, amaze
Our brief humanities;
And so does Earth; for Homer's fame,
Tho' carved in harder stone—
The falling drop will make his name
As mortal as my own.

IRENE.

No!

POET.

Let it live then—ay, till when?
Earth passes, all is lost

In what they prophesy, our wise men,
Sun-flame or sunless frost,
And deed and song alike are swept
Away, and all in vain
As far as man can see, except
The man himself remain;
And tho', in this lean age forlorn,
Too many a voice may cry
That man can have no after-morn,
Not yet of these am I.
The man remains, and whatso'er
He wrought of good or brave
Will mould him thro' the cycle-year
That dawns behind the grave.

And here the Singer for his Art
Not all in vain may plead
'The song that nerves a nation's heart
Is in itself a deed.'

TO VIRGIL.

WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF THE MANTUANS FOR THE NINETEENTH CENTENARY OF VIRGIL'S DEATH.

I.

Roman Virgil, thou that singest
Ilion's lofty temples robed in fire,
Ilion falling, Rome arising,
wars, and filial faith, and Dido's pyre;

II.

Landscape-lover, lord of language
more than he that sang the Works and Days,
All the chosen coin of fancy
flashing out from many a golden phrase;

III.

Thou that singest wheat and woodland,
tilth and vineyard, hive and horse and herd;
All the charm of all the Muses
often flowering in a lonely word;

IV.

Poet of the happy Tityrus
piping underneath his beechen bowers;
Poet of the poet-satyr
whom the laughing shepherd bound with flowers;

V.

Chanter of the Pollio, glorying
in the blissful years again to be,
Summers of the snakeless meadow,
unlaborious earth and oarless sea;

VI.

Thou that seëst Universal
Nature moved by Universal Mind;
Thou majestic in thy sadness
at the doubtful doom of human kind;

VII.

Light among the vanish'd ages;
star that gildest yet this phantom shore;
Golden branch amid the shadows,
kings and realms that pass to rise no more;

VIII.

Now thy Forum roars no longer,
fallen every purple Cæsar's dome—
Tho' thine ocean-roll of rhythm
sound for ever of Imperial Rome—

IX.

Now the Rome of slaves hath perish'd,
and the Rome of freemen holds her place,
I, from out the Northern Island
sunder'd once from all the human race,

X.

I salute thee, Mantovano,
I that loved thee since my day began,
Wielder of the stateliest measure
ever moulded by the lips of man.

THE DEAD PROPHET.

182–.

I.

DEAD!
And the Muses cried with a stormy cry
'Send them no more, for evermore.
Let the people die.'

II.

Dead!
'Is it *he* then brought so low?'
And a careless people flock'd from the fields
With a purse to pay for the show.

III.

Dead, who had served his time,
Was one of the people's kings,
Had labour'd in lifting them out of slime,
And showing them, souls have wings!

IV.

Dumb on the winter heath he lay.
His friends had stript him bare,
And roll'd his nakedness everyway
That all the crowd might stare.

V.

A storm-worn signpost not to be read,
And a tree with a moulder'd nest
On its barkless bones, stood stark by the dead;
And behind him, low in the West,

VI.

With shifting ladders of shadow and light,
And blurr'd in colour and form,
The sun hung over the gates of Night,
And glared at a coming storm.

VII.

Then glided a vulturous Beldam forth,
That on dumb death had thriven;
They call'd her 'Reverence' here upon earth,
And 'The Curse of the Prophet' in Heaven.

VIII.

She knelt—'We worship him'—all but wept—
'So great so noble was he!'
She clear'd her sight, she arose, she swept
The dust of earth from her knee.

IX.

'Great! for he spoke and the people heard,
And his eloquence caught like a flame
From zone to zone of the world, till his Word
Had won him a noble name.

X.

'Noble! he sung, and the sweet sound ran
Thro' palace and cottage door,
For he touch'd on the whole sad planet of man,
The kings and the rich and the poor;

XI.

'And he sung not alone of an old sun set,
But a sun coming up in his youth!
Great and noble—O yes—but yet—
For man is a lover of Truth,

XII.

'And bound to follow, wherever she go
Stark-naked, and up or down,
Thro' her high hill-passes of stainless snow,
Or the foulest sewer of the town—

XIII.

'Noble and great—O ay—but then,
Tho' a prophet should have his due,
Was he noblier-fashion'd than other men?
Shall we see to it, I and you?

XIV.

'For since he would sit on a Prophet's seat,
As a lord of the Human soul,
We needs must scan him from head to feet
Were it but for a wart or a mole?'

XV.

His wife and his child stood by him in tears,
But she—she push'd them aside.
'Tho' a name may last for a thousand years,
Yet a truth is a truth,' she cried.

XVI.

And she that had haunted his pathway still,
Had often truckled and cower'd
When he rose in his wrath, and had yielded her will
To the master, as overpower'd,

XVII.

She tumbled his helpless corpse about.
'Small blemish upon the skin!
But I think we know what is fair without
Is often as foul within.'

XVIII.

She crouch'd, she tore him part from part,
And out of his body she drew
The red 'Blood-eagle' [1] of liver and heart;
She held them up to the view;

XIX.

She gabbled, as she groped in the dead,
And all the people were pleased;

[1] Old Viking term for lungs, liver, etc., when torn by the conqueror out of the body of the conquered.

'See, what a little heart,' she said,
'And the liver is half-diseased!'

xx.

She tore the Prophet after death,
And the people paid her well.
Lightnings flicker'd along the heath;
One shriek'd 'The fires of Hell!'

EARLY SPRING.

Once more the Heavenly Power
  Makes all things new,
And domes the red-plow'd hills
  With loving blue;
The blackbirds have their wills,
  The throstles too.

II.

Opens a door in Heaven;
  From skies of glass
A Jacob's ladder falls
  On greening grass,
And o'er the mountain-walls
  Young angels pass.

III.

Before them fleets the shower,
  And burst the buds,

And shine the level lands,
  And flash the floods;
The stars are from their hands
  Flung thro' the woods,

IV.

The woods with living airs
  How softly fann'd,
Light airs from where the deep,
  All down the sand,
Is breathing in his sleep,
  Heard by the land.

V.

O follow, leaping blood,
  The season's lure!
O heart, look down and up
  Serene, secure,
Warm as the crocus cup,
  Like snowdrops, pure!

VI.

Past, Future glimpse and fade
  Thro' some slight spell,
A gleam from yonder vale,
  Some far blue fell,

And sympathies, how frail,
In sound and smell!

VII.

Till at thy chuckled note,
Thou twinkling bird,
The fairy fancies range,
And, lightly stirr'd,
Ring little bells of change
From word to word.

VIII.

For now the Heavenly Power
Makes all things new,
And thaws the cold, and fills
The flower with dew;
The blackbirds have their wills,
The poets too.

PREFATORY POEM TO MY BROTHER'S SONNETS.

Midnight, June 30, 1879.

I.

MIDNIGHT—in no midsummer tune
The breakers lash the shores:
The cuckoo of a joyless June
Is calling out of doors:

And thou hast vanish'd from thine own
To that which looks like rest,
True brother, only to be known
By those who love thee best.

II.

Midnight—and joyless June gone by,
And from the deluged park
The cuckoo of a worse July
Is calling thro' the dark:

But thou art silent underground,
And o'er thee streams the rain,
True poet, surely to be found
When Truth is found again.

III.

And, now to these unsummer'd skies
The summer bird is still,
Far off a phantom cuckoo cries
From out a phantom hill;

And thro' this midnight breaks the sun
Of sixty years away,
The light of days when life begun,
The days that seem to-day,

When all my griefs were shared with thee,
As all my hopes were thine—
As all thou wert was one with me,
May all thou art be mine!

'FRATER AVE ATQUE VALE.'

Row us out from Desenzano, to your Sirmione row!
So they row'd, and there we landed—'O venusta Sirmio!'
There to me thro' all the groves of olive in the summer glow,
There beneath the Roman ruin where the purple flowers grow,
Came that 'Ave atque Vale' of the Poet's hopeless woe,
Tenderest of Roman poets nineteen-hundred years ago,
'Frater Ave atque Vale'—as we wander'd to and fro
Gazing at the Lydian laughter of the Garda Lake below
Sweet Catullus's all-but-island, olive-silvery Sirmio!

HELEN'S TOWER.[1]

Helen's Tower, here I stand,
Dominant over sea and land
Son's love built me, and I hold
Mother's love in letter'd gold.
Love is in and out of time,
I am mortal stone and lime.
Would my granite girth were strong
As either love, to last as long!
I should wear my crown entire
To and thro' the Doomsday fire,
And be found of angel eyes
In earth's recurring Paradise.

[1] Written at the request of my friend, Lord Dufferin.

EPITAPH ON LORD STRATFORD DE REDCLIFFE.

In Westminster Abbey.

Thou third great Canning, stand among our best
And noblest, now thy long day's work hath ceased,
Here silent in our Minster of the West
Who wert the voice of England in the East

EPITAPH ON GENERAL GORDON.

In the Gordon Boys' National Memorial Home near Woking.

Warrior of God, man's friend, and tyrant's foe,
Now somewhere dead far in the waste Soudan,
Thou livest in all hearts, for all men know
This earth has never borne a nobler man.

EPITAPH ON CAXTON.

In St. Margaret's, Westminster.

Fiat Lux (his motto).

Thy prayer was 'Light—more Light—while Time
shall last!'
Thou sawest a glory growing on the night,
But not the shadows which that light would cast,
Till shadows vanish in the Light of Light.

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TO THE DUKE OF ARGYLL.

O Patriot Statesman, be thou wise to know
The limits of resistance, and the bounds
Determining concession; still be bold
Not only to slight praise but suffer scorn;
And be thy heart a fortress to maintain
The day against the moment, and the year
Against the day; thy voice, a music heard
Thro' all the yells and counter-yells of feud
And faction, and thy will, a power to make
This ever-changing world of circumstance,
In changing, chime with never-changing Law.

HANDS ALL ROUND.

First pledge our Queen this solemn night,
Then drink to England, every guest;
That man's the best Cosmopolite
Who loves his native country best.
May freedom's oak for ever live
With stronger life from day to day;
That man's the true Conservative
Who lops the moulder'd branch away.
Hands all round!
God the traitor's hope confound!
To this great cause of Freedom drink, my friends,
And the great name of England, round and round.

To all the loyal hearts who long
To keep our English Empire whole!
To all our noble sons, the strong
New England of the Southern Pole!
To England under Indian skies,
To those dark millions of her realm!

To Canada whom we love and prize,
Whatever statesman hold the helm.
Hands all round!
God the traitor's hope confound!
To this great name of England drink, my friends,
And all her glorious empire, round and round.

To all our statesmen so they be
True leaders of the land's desire!
To both our Houses, may they see
Beyond the borough and the shire!
We sail'd wherever ship could sail,
We founded many a mighty state;
Pray God our greatness may not fail
Thro' craven fears of being great.
Hands all round!
God the traitor's hope confound!
To this great cause of Freedom drink, my friends,
And the great name of England, round and round.

FREEDOM.

I.

O THOU so fair in summers gone,
  While yet thy fresh and virgin soul
Inform'd the pillar'd Parthenon,
  The glittering Capitol;

II.

So fair in southern sunshine bathed,
  But scarce of such majestic mien
As here with forehead vapour-swathed
  In meadows ever green;

III.

For thou—when Athens reign'd and Rome,
  Thy glorious eyes were dimm'd with pain
To mark in many a freeman's home
  The slave, the scourge, the chain;

IV.

O follower of the Vision, still
In motion to the distant gleam,
Howe'er blind force and brainless will
May jar thy golden dream

V.

Of Knowledge fusing class with class,
Of civic Hate no more to be,
Of Love to leaven all the mass,
Till every Soul be free;

VI.

Who yet, like Nature, wouldst not mar
By changes all too fierce and fast
This order of Her Human Star,
This heritage of the past;

VII.

O scorner of the party cry
That wanders from the public good,
Thou—when the nations rear on high
Their idol smear'd with blood,

VIII.

And when they roll their idol down—
  Of saner worship sanely proud;
Thou loather of the lawless crown
  As of the lawless crowd;

IX.

How long thine ever-growing mind
  Hath still'd the blast and strown the wave,
Tho' some of late would raise a wind
  To sing thee to thy grave,

X.

Men loud against all forms of power—
  Unfurnish'd brows, tempestuous tongues—
Expecting all things in an hour—
  Brass mouths and iron lungs!

TO H.R.H. PRINCESS BEATRICE.

Two Suns of Love make day of human life,
Which else with all its pains, and griefs, and deaths,
Were utter darkness—one, the Sun of dawn
That brightens thro' the Mother's tender eyes,
And warms the child's awakening world—and one
The later-rising Sun of spousal Love,
Which from her household orbit draws the child
To move in other spheres. The Mother weeps
At that white funeral of the single life,
Her maiden daughter's marriage; and her tears
Are half of pleasure, half of pain—the child
Is happy—ev'n in leaving *her!* but Thou,
True daughter, whose all-faithful, filial eyes
Have seen the loneliness of earthly thrones,
Wilt neither quit the widow'd Crown, nor let
This later light of Love have risen in vain,
But moving thro' the Mother's home, between
The two that love thee, lead a summer life,
Sway'd by each Love, and swaying to each Love,
Like some conjectured planet in mid heaven
Between two Suns, and drawing down from both
The light and genial warmth of double day.

THE FLEET.[1]

I.

You, you, *if* you shall fail to understand
What England is, and what her all-in-all,
On you will come the curse of all the land,
Should this old England fall
Which Nelson left so great.

[1] The speaker said that 'he should like to be assured that other outlying portions of the Empire, the Crown colonies, and important coaling stations were being as promptly and as thoroughly fortified as the various capitals of the self-governing colonies. He was credibly informed this was not so. It was impossible, also, not to feel some degree of anxiety about the efficacy of present provision to defend and protect, by means of swift well-armed cruisers, the immense mercantile fleet of the Empire. A third source of anxiety, so far as the colonies were concerned, was the apparently insufficient provision for the rapid manufacture of armaments and their prompt despatch when ordered to their colonial destination. Hence the necessity for manufacturing appliances equal to the requirements, not of Great Britain alone, but of the whole Empire. But the keystone of the whole was the necessity for an overwhelmingly powerful fleet and efficient defence for all necessary coaling stations. This was as essential for the colonies as for Great Britain. It was the one condition for the continuance of the Empire. All that Continental Powers did with respect to armies England should effect with her navy. It was essentially a defensive force, and could be moved rapidly from point to point, but it should be

II.

His isle, the mightiest Ocean-power on earth,
Our own fair isle, the lord of every sea—
Her fuller franchise—what would that be worth—
Her ancient fame of Free—
Were she . . . a fallen state?

III.

Her dauntless army scatter'd, and so small,
Her island-myriads fed from alien lands—
The fleet of England is her all-in-all;
Her fleet is in your hands,
And in her fleet her Fate.

IV.

You, you, that have the ordering of her fleet,
If you should only compass her disgrace,
When all men starve, the wild mob's million feet
Will kick you from your place,
But then too late, too late.

equal to all that was expected from it. It was to strengthen the fleet that colonists would first readily tax themselves, because they realised how essential a powerful fleet was to the safety, not only of that extensive commerce sailing in every sea, but ultimately to the security of the distant portions of the Empire. Who could estimate the loss involved in even a brief period of disaster to the Imperial Navy? Any amount of money timely expended in preparation would be quite insignificant when compared with the possible calamity he had referred to.'—*Extract from Sir Graham Berry's Speech at the Colonial Institute, 9th November* 1886.

OPENING OF THE INDIAN AND COLONIAL EXHIBITION BY THE QUEEN.

Written at the Request of the Prince of Wales.

I.

Welcome, welcome with one voice!
In your welfare we rejoice,
Sons and brothers that have sent,
From isle and cape and continent,
Produce of your field and flood,
Mount and mine, and primal wood;
Works of subtle brain and hand,
And splendours of the morning land,
Gifts from every British zone;
Britons, hold your own!

II.

May we find, as ages run,
The mother featured in the son;
And may yours for ever be
That old strength and constancy

Which has made your fathers great
In our ancient island State,
And wherever her flag fly,
Glorying between sea and sky,
Makes the might of Britain known;
Britons, hold your own!

III.

Britain fought her sons of yore—
Britain fail'd; and never more,
Careless of our growing kin,
Shall we sin our fathers' sin,
Men that in a narrower day—
Unprophetic rulers they—
Drove from out the mother's nest
That young eagle of the West
To forage for herself alone;
Britons, hold your own!

IV.

Sharers of our glorious past,
Brothers, must we part at last?
Shall we not thro' good and ill
Cleave to one another still?
Britain's myriad voices call,

'Sons, be welded each and all,
Into one imperial whole,
One with Britain, heart and soul!
One life, one flag, one fleet, one Throne!
Britons, hold your own!

POETS AND THEIR BIBLIOGRAPHIES.

Old poets foster'd under friendlier skies,
  Old Virgil who would write ten lines, they say,
  At dawn, and lavish all the golden day
To make them wealthier in his readers' eyes;
And you, old popular Horace, you the wise
  Adviser of the nine-years-ponder'd lay,
  And you, that wear a wreath of sweeter bay,
Catullus, whose dead songster never dies;
If, glancing downward on the kindly sphere
  That once had roll'd you round and round the Sun,
  You see your Art still shrined in human shelves,
You should be jubilant that you flourish'd here
  Before the Love of Letters, overdone,
Had swampt the sacred poets with themselves.

DEMETER AND OTHER POEMS.

TO THE MARQUIS OF DUFFERIN AND AVA.

I.

At times our Britain cannot rest,
  At times her steps are swift and rash;
  She moving, at her girdle clash
The golden keys of East and West.

II.

Not swift or rash, when late she lent
  The sceptres of her West, her East,
  To one, that ruling has increased
Her greatness and her self-content.

III.

Your rule has made the people love
  Their ruler. Your viceregal days
  Have added fulness to the phrase
Of 'Gauntlet in the velvet glove.'

IV.

But since your name will grow with Time,
Not all, as honouring your fair fame
Of Statesman, have I made the name
A golden portal to my rhyme:

V.

But more, that you and yours may know
From me and mine, how dear a debt
We owed you, and are owing yet
To you and yours, and still would owe.

VI.

For he—your India was his Fate,
And drew him over sea to you—
He fain had ranged her thro' and thro',
To serve her myriads and the State,—

VII.

A soul that, watch'd from earliest youth,
And on thro' many a brightening year,
Had never swerved for craft or fear,
By one side-path, from simple truth;

VIII.

Who might have chased and claspt Renown
And caught her chaplet here—and there
In haunts of jungle-poison'd air
The flame of life went wavering down;

IX.

But ere he left your fatal shore,
And lay on that funereal boat,
Dying, 'Unspeakable' he wrote
'Their kindness,' and he wrote no more;

X.

And sacred is the latest word;
And now the Was, the Might-have-been,
And those lone rites I have not seen,
And one drear sound I have not heard,

XI.

Are dreams that scarce will let me be,
Not there to bid my boy farewell,
When That within the coffin fell,
Fell—and flash'd into the Red Sea,

XII.

Beneath a hard Arabian moon
And alien stars. To question, why
The sons before the fathers die,
Not mine! and I may meet him soon;

XIII.

But while my life's late eve endures,
Nor settles into hueless gray,
My memories of his briefer day
Will mix with love for you and yours.

ON THE JUBILEE OF QUEEN VICTORIA.

I.

Fifty times the rose has flower'd and faded,
Fifty times the golden harvest fallen,
Since our Queen assumed the globe, the sceptre.

II.

She beloved for a kindliness
Rare in Fable or History,
Queen, and Empress of India,
Crown'd so long with a diadem
Never worn by a worthier,
Now with prosperous auguries
Comes at last to the bounteous
Crowning year of her Jubilee.

III.

Nothing of the lawless, of the Despot,
Nothing of the vulgar, or vainglorious,
All is gracious, gentle, great and Queenly.

IV.

You then joyfully, all of you,
Set the mountain aflame to-night,
Shoot your stars to the firmament,
Deck your houses, illuminate
All your towns for a festival,
And in each let a multitude
Loyal, each, to the heart of it,
One full voice of allegiance,
Hail the fair Ceremonial
Of this year of her Jubilee.

V.

Queen, as true to womanhood as Queenhood,
Glorying in the glories of her people,
Sorrowing with the sorrows of the lowest!

VI.

You, that wanton in affluence,
Spare not now to be bountiful,
Call your poor to regale with you,
All the lowly, the destitute,
Make their neighbourhood healthfuller,
Give your gold to the Hospital,
Let the weary be comforted,

Let the needy be banqueted,
Let the maim'd in his heart rejoice
At this glad Ceremonial,
And this year of her Jubilee.

VII.

Henry's fifty years are all in shadow,
Gray with distance Edward's fifty summers,
Ev'n her Grandsire's fifty half forgotten.

VIII.

You, the Patriot Architect,
You that shape for Eternity,
Raise a stately memorial,
Make it regally gorgeous,
Some Imperial Institute,
Rich in symbol, in ornament,
Which may speak to the centuries,
All the centuries after us,
Of this great Ceremonial,
And this year of her Jubilee.

IX.

Fifty years of ever-broadening Commerce!
Fifty years of ever-brightening Science!
Fifty years of ever-widening Empire!

X.

You, the Mighty, the Fortunate,
You, the Lord-territorial,
You, the Lord-manufacturer,
You, the hardy, laborious,
Patient children of Albion,
You, Canadian, Indian,
Australasian, African,
All your hearts be in harmony,
All your voices in unison,
Singing 'Hail to the glorious
Golden year of her Jubilee!'

XI.

Are there thunders moaning in the distance?
Are there spectres moving in the darkness?
Trust the Hand of Light will lead her people,
Till the thunders pass, the spectres vanish,
And the Light is Victor, and the darkness
Dawns into the Jubilee of the Ages.

TO PROFESSOR JEBB.

With the Following Poem.

Fair things are slow to fade away,
Bear witness you, that yesterday[1]
From out the Ghost of Pindar in you
Roll'd an Olympian; and they say[2]

That here the torpid mummy wheat
Of Egypt bore a grain as sweet
As that which gilds the glebe of England,
Sunn'd with a summer of milder heat.

So may this legend for awhile,
If greeted by your classic smile,
Tho' dead in its Trinacrian Enna,
Blossom again on a colder isle.

[1] In Bologna. [2] They say, for the fact is doubtful.

DEMETER AND PERSEPHONE.

(In Enna.)

Faint as a climate-changing bird that flies
All night across the darkness, and at dawn
Falls on the threshold of her native land,
And can no more, thou camest, O my child,
Led upward by the God of ghosts and dreams,
Who laid thee at Eleusis, dazed and dumb
With passing thro' at once from state to state,
Until I brought thee hither, that the day,
When here thy hands let fall the gather'd flower,
Might break thro' clouded memories once again
On thy lost self. A sudden nightingale
Saw thee, and flash'd into a frolic of song
And welcome; and a gleam as of the moon,
When first she peers along the tremulous deep,
Fled wavering o'er thy face, and chased away
That shadow of a likeness to the king
Of shadows, thy dark mate. Persephone!
Queen of the dead no more—my child! Thine
eyes

Again were human-godlike, and the Sun
Burst from a swimming fleece of winter gray,
And robed thee in his day from head to feet—
'Mother!' and I was folded in thine arms.

Child, those imperial, disimpassion'd eyes
Awed even me at first, thy mother—eyes
That oft had seen the serpent-wanded power
Draw downward into Hades with his drift
Of flickering spectres, lighted from below
By the red race of fiery Phlegethon;
But when before have Gods or men beheld
The Life that had descended re-arise,
And lighted from above him by the Sun?
So mighty was the mother's childless cry,
A cry that rang thro' Hades, Earth, and Heaven!

So in this pleasant vale we stand again,
The field of Enna, now once more ablaze
With flowers that brighten as thy footstep falls,
All flowers—but for one black blur of earth
Left by that closing chasm, thro' which the car
Of dark Aïdoneus rising rapt thee hence.
And here, my child, tho' folded in thine arms,
I feel the deathless heart of motherhood
Within me shudder, lest the naked glebe
Should yawn once more into the gulf, and thence

The shrilly whinnyings of the team of Hell,
Ascending, pierce the glad and songful air,
And all at once their arch'd necks, midnight-maned,
Jet upward thro' the mid-day blossom. No!
For, see, thy foot has touch'd it; all the space
Of blank earth-baldness clothes itself afresh,
And breaks into the crocus-purple hour
That saw thee vanish.

Child, when thou wert gone,
I envied human wives, and nested birds,
Yea, the cubb'd lioness; went in search of thee
Thro' many a palace, many a cot, and gave
Thy breast to ailing infants in the night,
And set the mother waking in amaze
To find her sick one whole; and forth again
Among the wail of midnight winds, and cried,
'Where is my loved one? Wherefore do ye wail?'
And out from all the night an answer shrill'd,
'We know not, and we know not why we wail.'
I climb'd on all the cliffs of all the seas,
And ask'd the waves that moan about the world
'Where? do ye make your moaning for my child?'
And round from all the world the voices came
'We know not, and we know not why we moan.'
'Where'? and I stared from every eagle-peak,
I thridded the black heart of all the woods,

I peer'd thro' tomb and cave, and in the storms
Of Autumn swept across the city, and heard
The murmur of their temples chanting me,
Me, me, the desolate Mother! 'Where'?—and turn'd,
And fled by many a waste, forlorn of man,
And grieved for man thro' all my grief for thee,— .
The jungle rooted in his shatter'd hearth,
The serpent coil'd about his broken shaft,
The scorpion crawling over naked skulls;—
I saw the tiger in the ruin'd fane
Spring from his fallen God, but trace of thee
I saw not; and far on, and, following out
A league of labyrinthine darkness, came
On three gray heads beneath a gleaming rift.
'Where'? and I heard one voice from all the three
'We know not, for we spin the lives of men,
And not of Gods, and know not why we spin!
There is a Fate beyond us.' Nothing knew.

Last as the likeness of a dying man,
Without his knowledge, from him flits to warn
A far-off friendship that he comes no more,
So he, the God of dreams, who heard my cry,
Drew from thyself the likeness of thyself
Without thy knowledge, and thy shadow past
Before me, crying 'The Bright one in the highest

Is brother of the Dark one in the lowest,
And Bright and Dark have sworn that I, the child
Of thee, the great Earth-Mother, thee, the Power
That lifts her buried life from gloom to bloom,
Should be for ever and for evermore
Bride of Darkness.'

So the Shadow wail'd.
Then I, Earth-Goddess, cursed the Gods of Heaven.
I would not mingle with their feasts; to me
Their nectar smack'd of hemlock on the lips,
Their rich ambrosia tasted aconite.
The man, that only lives and loves an hour,
Seem'd nobler than their hard Eternities.
My quick tears kill'd the flower, my ravings hush'd
The bird, and lost in utter grief I fail'd
To send my life thro' olive-yard and vine
And golden grain, my gift to helpless man.
Rain-rotten died the wheat, the barley-spears
Were hollow-husk'd, the leaf fell, and the sun,
Pale at my grief, drew down before his time
Sickening, and Ætna kept her winter snow.
Then He, the brother of this Darkness, He
Who still is highest, glancing from his height
On earth a fruitless fallow, when he miss'd
The wonted steam of sacrifice, the praise
And prayer of men, decreed that thou should'st dwell

For nine white moons of each whole year with me,
Three dark ones in the shadow with thy King.

Once more the reaper in the gleam of dawn
Will see me by the landmark far away,
Blessing his field, or seated in the dusk
Of even, by the lonely threshing-floor,
Rejoicing in the harvest and the grange.
Yet I, Earth-Goddess, am but ill-content
With them, who still are highest. Those gray heads,
What meant they by their 'Fate beyond the Fates'
But younger kindlier Gods to bear us down,
As we bore down the Gods before us? Gods,
To quench, not hurl the thunderbolt, to stay,
Not spread the plague, the famine; Gods indeed,
To send the noon into the night and break
The sunless halls of Hades into Heaven?
Till thy dark lord accept and love the Sun,
And all the Shadow die into the Light,
When thou shalt dwell the whole bright year with me,
And souls of men, who grew beyond their race,
And made themselves as Gods against the fear
Of Death and Hell; and thou that hast from men,
As Queen of Death, that worship which is Fear,
Henceforth, as having risen from out the dead,
Shalt ever send thy life along with mine
From buried grain thro' springing blade, and bless

Their garner'd Autumn also, reap with me,
Earth-mother, in the harvest hymns of Earth
The worship which is Love, and see no more
The Stone, the Wheel, the dimly-glimmering lawns
Of that Elysium, all the hateful fires
Of torment, and the shadowy warrior glide
Along the silent field of Asphodel.

OWD ROÄ.[1]

Naäv, noä mander[2] o' use to be callin' 'im Roä, Roä,
Roä,
Fur the dog's stoän-deäf, an' 'e's blind, 'e can naither
stan' nor goä.

But I meäns fur to maäke 'is owd aäge as 'appy as
iver I can,
Fur I owäs owd Roäver moor nor I iver owäd mottal
man.

Thou's rode of 'is back when a babby, afoor thou was
gotten too owd,
Fur 'e'd fetch an' carry like owt, 'e was allus as good
as gowd.

Eh, but 'e'd fight wi' a will *when* 'e fowt; 'e could
howd[3] 'is oan,
An' Roä was the dog as knaw'd when an' wheere to
bury his boane.

[1] Old Rover. [2] Manner. [3] Hold.

An' 'e kep his heäd hoop like a king, an' 'e'd niver not down wi' 'is taäil,
Fur 'e'd niver done nowt to be shaämed on, when we was i' Howlaby Daäle.

An' 'e sarved me sa well when 'e lived, that, Dick, when 'e cooms to be deäd,
I thinks as I'd like fur to hev soom soort of a sarvice reäd.

Fur 'e's moor good sense na the Parliament man 'at stans fur us 'ere,
An' I'd voät fur 'im, my oän sen, if 'e could but stan fur the Shere.

'Faäithful an' True'—them words be i' Scriptur—an' Faäithful an' True
Ull be fun'[1] upo' four short legs ten times fur one upo' two.

An' maäybe they'll walk upo' two but I knaws they runs upo' four,[2]—
Bedtime, Dicky! but waäit till tha 'eärs it be strikin' the hour.

Fur I wants to tell tha o' Roä when we lived i' Howlaby Daäle,

[1] Found. [2] 'Ou' as in 'house.'

Ten year sin—Naäy—naäy! tha mun nobbut hev' one glass of aäle.

Straänge an' owd-farran'd[1] the 'ouse, an' belt[2] long afoor my daäy
Wi' haäfe o' the chimleys a-twizzen'd[3] an' twined like a band o' haäy.

The fellers as maäkes them picturs, 'ud coom at the fall o' the year,
An' sattle their ends upo' stools to pictur the door-poorch theere,

An' the Heagle 'as hed two heäds stannin' theere o' the brokken stick;[4]
An' they niver 'ed seed sich ivin'[5] as graw'd hall ower the brick;

An' theere i' the 'ouse one night—but it's down, an' all on it now
Goan into mangles an' tonups,[6] an' raäved slick thruf by the plow—

Theere, when the 'ouse wur a house, one night I wur sittin' aloän,

[1] 'Owd-farran'd,' old-fashioned.
[2] Built.
[3] 'Twizzen'd,' twisted.
[4] On a staff *ragulé*.
[5] Ivy.
[6] Mangolds and turnips.

Wi' Roäver athurt my feeät, an' sleeäpin' still as a stoän,

Of a Christmas Eäve, an' as cowd as this, an' the midders[1] as white,
An' the fences all on 'em bolster'd oop wi' the windle[2] that night;

An' the cat wur a-sleeäpin' alongside Roäver, but I wur awaäke,
An' smoäkin' an' thinkin' o' things—Doänt maäke thsyen sick wi' the caäke.

Fur the men ater supper 'ed sung their songs an' 'ed 'ed their beer,
An' 'ed goän their waäys; ther was nobbut three, an' noän on 'em theere.

They was all on 'em fear'd o' the Ghoäst an' dussn't not sleeäp i' the 'ouse,
But Dicky, the Ghoäst moästlins[3] was nobbut a rat or a mouse.

An' I looökt out wonst[4] at the night, an' the daäle was all of a thaw,

[1] Meadows.
[2] Drifted snow.
[3] 'Moästlins,' for the most part, generally.
[4] Once.

Fur I seed the beck coomin' down like a long black
snääke i' the snaw,

An' I heärd greät heäps o' the snaw slushin' down
fro' the bank to the beck,
An' then as I stood i' the doorwaäy, I feeäld it drip
o' my neck.

Saw I turn'd in ageän, an' I thowt o' the good owd
times 'at was goan,
An' the munney they maäde by the war, an' the times
'at was coomin' on;

Fur I thowt if the Staäte was agawin' to let in furri-
ners' wheät,
Howiver was British farmers to stan' ageän o' their
feeät.

Howiver was I fur to find my rent an' to paäy my
men?
An' all along o' the feller[1] as turn'd 'is back of
hissen.

Thou slep i' the chaumber above us, we couldn't ha'
'eärd tha call,
Sa Moother 'ed tell'd ma to bring tha down, an' thy
craädle an' all;

[1] Peel.

Fur the gell o' the farm 'at slep wi' tha then 'ed
gotten wer leäve,
Fur to goä that night to 'er foälk by cause o' the
Christmas Eäve;

But I cleän forgot tha, my lad, when Moother 'ed
gotten to bed,
An' I slep i' my chair hup-on-end, an' the Freeä
Traäde runn'd i' my 'ead,

Till I dreäm'd 'at Squire walkt in, an' I says to him
'Squire, ya're laäte,'
Then I seed at 'is faäce wur as red as the Yule-block
theer i' the graäte.

An' 'e says 'can ya paäy me the rent to-night?' an' I
says to 'im 'Noä,'
An' 'e cotch'd howd hard o' my hairm,[1] 'Then hout
to-night tha shall goä.'

'Tha'll niver,' says I, 'be a-turnin ma hout upo'
Christmas Eäve'?
Then I waäked an' I fun it was Roäver a-tuggin' an'
teärin' my slieäve.

An' I thowt as 'e'd goän cleän-wud,[2] fur I noäwaäys
knaw'd 'is intent;

[1] Arm. [2] Mad.

An' I says 'Git awaäy, ya beäst,' an' I fetcht 'im a kick an' 'e went.

Then 'e tummled up stairs, fur I 'eärd 'im, as if 'e'd 'a brokken 'is neck,
An' I'd cleär forgot, little Dicky, thy chaumber door wouldn't sneck;[1]

An' I slep' i' my chair ageän wi' my hairm hingin' down to the floor,
An' I thowt it was Roäver a-tuggin' an' teärin' me wuss nor afoor,

An' I thowt 'at I kick'd 'im ageän, but I kick'd thy Moother istead.
'What arta snorin' theere fur? the house is afire,' she said.

Thy Moother 'ed beän a-naggin' about the gell o' the farm,
She offens 'ud spy summut wrong when there warn't not a mossel o' harm;

An' she didn't not solidly meän I wur gawin' that waäy to the bad,
Fur the gell[2] was as howry a trollope as iver traäpes'd i' the squad.

[1] Latch. [2] The girl was as dirty a slut as ever trudged in the mud, but there is a sense of slatternliness in 'traäpes'd' which is not expressed in 'trudged.'

But Moother was free of 'er tongue, as I offens 'ev tell'd 'er mysen,
Sa I kep i' my chair, fur I thowt she was nobbut a-rilin' ma then.

An' I says 'I'd be good to tha, Bess, if tha'd onywaäys let ma be good,'
But she skelpt ma haäfe ower i' the chair, an' screeäd like a Howl gone wud[1]—

'Ya mun run fur the lether.[2] Git oop, if ya're onywaäys good for owt.'
And I says 'If I beänt noäwaäys—not nowadaäys—good fur nowt—

'Yit I beänt sich a Nowt[3] of all Nowts as 'ull hallus do as 'e's bid.'
'But the stairs is afire,' she said; then I seed 'er a-cryin', I did.

An' she beäld 'Ya mun saäve little Dick, an' be sharp about it an' all,'
Sa I runs to the yard fur a lether, an' sets 'im ageän the wall,

[1] She half overturned me and shrieked like an owl gone mad.
[2] Ladder.
[3] A thoroughly insignificant or worthless person.

An' I claums an' I mashes the winder hin, when I gits to the top,
But the heät druv hout i' my heyes till I feäld mysen ready to drop.

Thy Moother was howdin' the lether, an' tellin' me not to be skeärd,
An' I wasn't afeärd, or I thinks leästwaäys as I wasn't afeärd;

But I couldn't see fur the smoäke wheere thou was a-liggin, my lad,
An' Roäver was theere i' the chaumber a-yowlin' an' yaupin' like mad;

An' thou was a-beälin' likewise, an' a-squeälin', as if tha was bit,
An' it wasn't a bite but a burn, fur the merk's[1] o' thy shou'der yit;

Then I call'd out Roä, Roä, Roä, thaw I didn't haäfe think as 'e'd 'eär,
But 'e coom'd thruf the fire wi' my bairn i' 'is mouth to the winder theere!

He coom'd like a Hangel o' marcy as soon as 'e 'eärd 'is naäme,

[1] Mark.

Or like tother Hangel i' Scriptur 'at summun seed i' the flaäme,

When summun 'ed hax'd fur a son, an' 'e promised a son to she,
An' Roä was as good as the Hangel i' saävin' a son fur me.

Sa I browt tha down, an' I says 'I mun gaw up ageän fur Roä.'
'Gaw up ageän fur the varmint?' I tell'd 'er 'Yeäs I mun goä.'

An' I claumb'd up ageän to the winder, an' clemm'd[1] owd Roä by the 'eäd,
An' 'is 'air coom'd off i' my 'ands an' I taäked 'im at fust fur deäd;

Fur 'e smell'd like a herse a-singein', an' seeäm'd as blind as a poop,
An' haäfe on 'im bare as a bublin'.[2] I couldn't wakken 'im oop,

But I browt 'im down, an' we got to the barn, fur the barn wouldn't burn
Wi' the wind blawin' hard tother waäy, an' the wind wasn't like to turn.

[1] Clutched. [2] 'Bubbling,' a young unfledged bird.

An' *I* kep a-callin' o' Roä till 'e waggled 'is taäil fur
a bit,
But the cocks kep a-crawin' an' crawin' all night, an'
I 'ears 'em yit;

An' the dogs was a-yowlin' all round, and thou was
a-squeälin' thysen,
An' Moother was naggin' an' groänin' an' moänin'
an' naggin' ageän;

An' I 'eärd the bricks an' the baulks[1] rummle down
when the roof gev waäy,
Fur the fire was a-raägin' an' raävin' an' roarin' like
judgment daäy.

Warm enew theere sewer-ly, but the barn was as cowd
as owt,
An' we cuddled and huddled togither, an' happt[2]
wersens oop as we mowt.

An' I browt Roä round, but Moother 'ed beän sa
soäk'd wi' the thaw
'At she cotch'd 'er death o' cowd that night, poor
soul, i' the straw.

[1] Beams. [2] Wrapt ourselves.

Haäfe o' the parish runn'd oop when the rigtree[1] was tummlin' in—
Too laäte—but it's all ower now—hall hower—an' ten year sin;

Too laäte, tha mun git tha to bed, but I'll coom an' I'll squench the light,
Fur we moänt 'ev naw moor fires—and soa little Dick, good-night.

[1] The beam that runs along the roof of the house just beneath the ridge.

VASTNESS.

I.

Many a hearth upon our dark globe sighs after many
a vanish'd face,
Many a planet by many a sun may roll with the dust
of a vanish'd race.

II.

Raving politics, never at rest—as this poor earth's
pale history runs,—
What is it all but a trouble of ants in the gleam of a
million million of suns?

III.

Lies upon this side, lies upon that side, truthless
violence mourn'd by the Wise,
Thousands of voices drowning his own in a popular
torrent of lies upon lies;

IV.

Stately purposes, valour in battle, glorious annals of
army and fleet,

Death for the right cause, death for the wrong cause,
trumpets of victory, groans of defeat;

v.

Innocence seethed in her mother's milk, and Charity
setting the martyr aflame;
Thraldom who walks with the banner of Freedom,
and recks not to ruin a realm in her name.

vi.

Faith at her zenith, or all but lost in the gloom of
doubts that darken the schools;
Craft with a bunch of all-heal in her hand, follow'd
up by her vassal legion of fools;

vii.

Trade flying over a thousand seas with her spice and
her vintage, her silk and her corn;
Desolate offing, sailorless harbours, famishing popu-
lace, wharves forlorn;

viii.

Star of the morning, Hope in the sunrise; gloom of
the evening, Life at a close;
Pleasure who flaunts on her wide down-way with her
flying robe and her poison'd rose;

IX.

Pain, that has crawl'd from the corpse of Pleasure, a
worm which writhes all day, and at night
Stirs up again in the heart of the sleeper, and stings
him back to the curse of the light;

X.

Wealth with his wines and his wedded harlots; honest
Poverty, bare to the bone;
Opulent Avarice, lean as Poverty; Flattery gilding
the rift in a throne;

XI.

Fame blowing out from her golden trumpet a jubilant
challenge to Time and to Fate;
Slander, her shadow, sowing the nettle on all the
laurel'd graves of the Great;

XII.

Love for the maiden, crown'd with marriage, no
regrets for aught that has been,
Household happiness, gracious children, debtless
competence, golden mean;

XIII.

National hatreds of whole generations, and pigmy
spites of the village spire;

Vows that will last to the last death-ruckle, and vows that are snapt in a moment of fire;

XIV.

He that has lived for the lust of the minute, and died in the doing it, flesh without mind;
He that has nail'd all flesh to the Cross, till Self died out in the love of his kind;

XV.

Spring and Summer and Autumn and Winter, and all these old revolutions of earth;
All new-old revolutions of Empire—change of the tide—what is all of it worth?

XVI.

What the philosophies, all the sciences, poesy, varying voices of prayer?
All that is noblest, all that is basest, all that is filthy with all that is fair?

XVII.

What is it all, if we all of us end but in being our own corpse-coffins at last,
Swallow'd in Vastness, lost in Silence, drown'd in the deeps of a meaningless Past?

XVIII.

What but a murmur of gnats in the gloom, or a moment's anger of bees in their hive?—

* * * * * * * *

Peace, let it be! for I loved him, and love him for ever: the dead are not dead but alive.

Dedicated to the Hon. J. Russell Lowell.

THE RING.

MIRIAM AND HER FATHER.

MIRIAM (*singing*).

MELLOW moon of heaven,
Bright in blue,
Moon of married hearts,
Hear me, you!

Twelve times in the year
Bring me bliss,
Globing Honey Moons
Bright as this.

Moon, you fade at times
From the night.
Young again you grow
Out of sight.

Silver crescent-curve,
Coming soon,
Globe again, and make
Honey Moon.

Shall not *my* love last,
Moon, with you,
For ten thousand years
Old and new?

FATHER.

And who was he with such love-drunken eyes
They made a thousand honey moons of one?

MIRIAM.

The prophet of his own, my Hubert—his
The words, and mine the setting. 'Air and Words,'
Said Hubert, when I sang the song, 'are bride
And bridegroom.' Does it please you?

FATHER.

Mainly, child,
Because I hear your Mother's voice in yours.
She——, why, you shiver tho' the wind is west
With all the warmth of summer.

MIRIAM.

Well, I felt
On a sudden I know not what, a breath that past
With all the cold of winter.

FATHER (*muttering to himself*).

Even so.
The Ghost in Man, the Ghost that once was Man,
But cannot wholly free itself from Man,
Are calling to each other thro' a dawn
Stranger than earth has ever seen; the veil
Is rending, and the Voices of the day
Are heard across the Voices of the dark.
No sudden heaven, nor sudden hell, for man,
But thro' the Will of One who knows and rules—
And utter knowledge is but utter love—
Æonian Evolution, swift or slow,
Thro' all the Spheres—an ever opening height,
An ever lessening earth—and she perhaps,
My Miriam, breaks her latest earthly link
With me to-day.

MIRIAM.

You speak so low, what is it?
Your 'Miriam breaks'—is making a new link
Breaking an old one?

FATHER.

No, for we, my child,
Have been till now each other's all-in-all.

MIRIAM.

And you the lifelong guardian of the child.

FATHER.

I, and one other whom you have not known.

MIRIAM.

And who? what other?

FATHER.

Whither are you bound?
For Naples which we only left in May?

MIRIAM.

No! father, Spain, but Hubert brings me home
With April and the swallow. Wish me joy!

FATHER.

What need to wish when Hubert weds in you
The heart of Love, and you the soul of Truth
In Hubert?

MIRIAM.

Tho' you used to call me once
The lonely maiden-Princess of the wood,
Who meant to sleep her hundred summers out
Before a kiss should wake her.

FATHER.

Ay, but now
Your fairy Prince has found you, take this ring.

MIRIAM.

'Io t'amo'—and these diamonds—beautiful!
'From Walter,' and for me from you then?

FATHER.

Well,
One way for Miriam.

MIRIAM.

Miriam am I not?

FATHER.

This ring bequeath'd you by your mother, child,
Was to be given you—such her dying wish—
Given on the morning when you came of age
Or on the day you married. Both the days
Now close in one. The ring is doubly yours.
Why do you look so gravely at the tower?

MIRIAM.

I never saw it yet so all ablaze
With creepers crimsoning to the pinnacles,
As if perpetual sunset linger'd there,
And all ablaze too in the lake below!
And how the birds that circle round the tower
Are cheeping to each other of their flight
To summer lands!

FATHER.

And that has made you grave?
Fly—care not. Birds and brides must leave the nest.
Child, I am happier in your happiness
Than in mine own.

MIRIAM.

It is not that!

FATHER.

What else?

MIRIAM.

That chamber in the tower.

FATHER.

What chamber, child?
Your nurse is here?

MIRIAM.

My Mother's nurse and mine.
She comes to dress me in my bridal veil.

FATHER.

What did she say?

MIRIAM.

She said, that you and I
Had been abroad for my poor health so long
She fear'd I had forgotten her, and I ask'd
About my Mother, and she said, 'Thy hair
Is golden like thy Mother's, not so fine.'

FATHER.

What then? what more?

MIRIAM.

She said—perhaps indeed
She wander'd, having wander'd now so far
Beyond the common date of death—that you,
When I was smaller than the statuette
Of my dear Mother on your bracket here—
You took me to that chamber in the tower,
The topmost—a chest there, by which you knelt—
And there were books and dresses—left to me,
A ring too which you kiss'd, and I, she said,

I babbled, Mother, Mother—as I used
To prattle to her picture—stretch'd my hands
As if I saw her; then a woman came
And caught me from my nurse. I hear her yet—
A sound of anger like a distant storm.

FATHER.

Garrulous old crone.

MIRIAM.

Poor nurse!

FATHER.

I bad her keep,
Like a seal'd book, all mention of the ring,
For I myself would tell you all to-day.

MIRIAM.

'She too might speak to-day,' she mumbled. Still,
I scarce have learnt the title of your book,
But you will turn the pages.

FATHER.

Ay, to-day!
I brought you to that chamber on your third
September birthday with your nurse, and felt
An icy breath play on me, while I stoopt
To take and kiss the ring.

MIRIAM.

This very ring
Io t'amo?

FATHER.

Yes, for some wild hope was mine
That, in the misery of my married life,
Miriam your Mother might appear to me.
She came to you, not me. The storm, you hear
Far-off, is Muriel—your step-mother's voice.

MIRIAM.

Vext, that you thought my Mother came to me?
Or at my crying 'Mother?' or to find
My Mother's diamonds hidden from her there,
Like worldly beauties in the Cell, not shown
To dazzle all that see them?

FATHER.

Wait a while.
Your Mother and step-mother—Miriam Erne
And Muriel Erne—the two were cousins—lived
With Muriel's mother on the down, that sees
A thousand squares of corn and meadow, far
As the gray deep, a landscape which your eyes
Have many a time ranged over when a babe.

MIRIAM.

I climb'd the hill with Hubert yesterday,
And from the thousand squares, one silent voice
Came on the wind, and seem'd to say 'Again.'
We saw far off an old forsaken house,
Then home, and past the ruin'd mill.

FATHER.

And there
I found these cousins often by the brook,
For Miriam sketch'd and Muriel threw the fly;
The girls of equal age, but one was fair,
And one was dark, and both were beautiful.
No voice for either spoke within my heart
Then, for the surface eye, that only doats
On outward beauty, glancing from the one
To the other, knew not that which pleased it most,
The raven ringlet or the gold; but both
Were dowerless, and myself, I used to walk
This Terrace—morbid, melancholy; mine
And yet not mine the hall, the farm, the field;
For all that ample woodland whisper'd 'debt,'
The brook that feeds this lakelet murmur'd 'debt,'
And in yon arching avenue of old elms,
Tho' mine, not mine, I heard the sober rook
And carrion crow cry 'Mortgage.'

MIRIAM.

Father's fault
Visited on the children!

FATHER.

Ay, but then
A kinsman, dying, summon'd me to Rome—
He left me wealth—and while I journey'd hence,
And saw the world fly by me like a dream,
And while I communed with my truest self,
I woke to all of truest in myself,
Till, in the gleam of those mid-summer dawns,
The form of Muriel faded, and the face
Of Miriam grew upon me, till I knew;
And past and future mix'd in Heaven and made
The rosy twilight of a perfect day.

MIRIAM.

So glad? no tear for him, who left you wealth,
Your kinsman?

FATHER.

I had seen the man but once;
He loved my name not me; and then I pass'd
Home, and thro' Venice, where a jeweller,
So far gone down, or so far up in life,
That he was nearing his own hundred, sold

This ring to me, then laugh'd 'the ring is weird.'
And weird and worn and wizard-like was he.
'Why weird?' I ask'd him; and he said 'The souls
Of two repentant Lovers guard the ring;'
Then with a ribald twinkle in his bleak eyes—
'And if you give the ring to any maid,
They still remember what it cost them here,
And bind the maid to love you by the ring;
And if the ring were stolen from the maid,
The theft were death or madness to the thief,
So sacred those Ghost Lovers hold the gift.'
And then he told their legend:

'Long ago
Two lovers parted by a scurrilous tale
Had quarrell'd, till the man repenting sent
This ring "Io t'amo" to his best beloved,
And sent it on her birthday. She in wrath
Return'd it on her birthday, and that day
His death-day, when, half-frenzied by the ring,
He wildly fought a rival suitor, him
The causer of that scandal, fought and fell;
And she that came to part them all too late,
And found a corpse and silence, drew the ring
From his dead finger, wore it till her death,
Shrined him within the temple of her heart,
Made every moment of her after life

A virgin victim to his memory,
And dying rose, and rear'd her arms, and cried
"I see him, Io t'amo, Io t'amo."'

MIRIAM.

Legend or true? so tender should be true!
Did *he* believe it? did you ask him?

FATHER.

Ay!
But that half skeleton, like a barren ghost
From out the fleshless world of spirits, laugh'd:
A hollow laughter!

MIRIAM.

Vile, so near the ghost
Himself, to laugh at love in death! But you?

FATHER.

Well, as the bygone lover thro' this ring
Had sent his cry for her forgiveness, I
Would call thro' this 'Io t'amo' to the heart
Of Miriam; then I bad the man engrave
'From Walter' on the ring, and send it—wrote
Name, surname, all as clear as noon, but he—
Some younger hand must have engraven the ring—
His fingers were so stiffen'd by the frost

Of seven and ninety winters, that he scrawl'd
A 'Miriam' that might seem a 'Muriel';
And Muriel claim'd and open'd what I meant
For Miriam, took the ring, and flaunted it
Before that other whom I loved and love.
A mountain stay'd me here, a minster there,
A galleried palace, or a battlefield,
Where stood the sheaf of Peace: but—coming home—
And on your Mother's birthday—all but yours—
A week betwixt—and when the tower as now
Was all ablaze with crimson to the roof,
And all ablaze too plunging in the lake
Head-foremost—who were those that stood between
The tower and that rich phantom of the tower?
Muriel and Miriam, each in white, and like
May-blossoms in mid autumn—was it they?
A light shot upward on them from the lake.
What sparkled there? whose hand was that? they stood
So close together. I am not keen of sight,
But coming nearer—Muriel had the ring—
'O Miriam! have you given your ring to her?
O Miriam!' Miriam redden'd, Muriel clench'd
The hand that wore it, till I cried again:
'O Miriam, if you love me take the ring!'
She glanced at me, at Muriel, and was mute.
'Nay, if you cannot love me, let it be.'
Then—Muriel standing ever statue-like—

She turn'd, and in her soft imperial way
And saying gently: 'Muriel, by your leave,'
Unclosed the hand, and from it drew the ring,
And gave it me, who pass'd it down her own,
'Io t'amo, all is well then.' Muriel fled.

MIRIAM.

Poor Muriel!

FATHER.

Ay, poor Muriel, when you hear
What follows! Miriam loved me from the first,
Not thro' the ring; but on her marriage-morn
This birthday, death-day, and betrothal ring,
Laid on her table overnight, was gone;
And after hours of search and doubt and threats,
And hubbub, Muriel enter'd with it, 'See!—
Found in a chink of that old moulder'd floor!'
My Miriam nodded with a pitying smile,
As who should say 'that those who lose can find.'
Then I and she were married for a year,
One year without a storm, or even a cloud;
And you my Miriam born within the year;
And she my Miriam dead within the year.
I sat beside her dying, and she gaspt:
'The books, the miniature, the lace are hers,
My ring too when she comes of age, or when
She marries; you—you loved me, kept your word.

You love me still "Io t'amo."—Muriel—no—
She cannot love; she loves her own hard self,
Her firm will, her fix'd purpose. Promise me,
Miriam not Muriel—she shall have the ring.'
And there the light of other life, which lives
Beyond our burial and our buried eyes,
Gleam'd for a moment in her own on earth.
I swore the vow, then with my latest kiss
Upon them, closed her eyes, which would not close,
But kept their watch upon the ring and you.
Your birthday was her death-day.

MIRIAM.

O poor Mother!
And you, poor desolate Father, and poor me,
The little senseless, worthless, wordless babe,
Saved when your life was wreck'd!

FATHER.

Desolate? yes!
Desolate as that sailor, whom the storm
Had parted from his comrade in the boat,
And dash'd half dead on barren sands, was I.
Nay, you were my one solace; only—you
Were always ailing. Muriel's mother sent,
And sure am I, by Muriel, one day came
And saw you, shook her head, and patted yours,

And smiled, and making with a kindly pinch
Each poor pale cheek a momentary rose—
'*That* should be fix'd,' she said; 'your pretty bud,
So blighted here, would flower into full health
Among our heath and bracken. Let her come!
And we will feed her with our mountain air,
And send her home to you rejoicing.' No—
We could not part. And once, when you my girl
Rode on my shoulder home—the tiny fist
Had graspt a daisy from your Mother's grave—
By the lych-gate was Muriel. 'Ay,' she said,
'Among the tombs in this damp vale of yours!
You scorn my Mother's warning, but the child
Is paler than before. We often walk
In open sun, and see beneath our feet
The mist of autumn gather from your lake,
And shroud the tower; and once we only saw
Your gilded vane, a light above the mist'—
(Our old bright bird that still is veering there
Above his four gold letters) 'and the light,'
She said, 'was like that light'—and there she paused,
And long; till I believing that the girl's
Lean fancy, groping for it, could not find
One likeness, laugh'd a little and found her two—
'A warrior's crest above the cloud of war'—
'A fiery phœnix rising from the smoke,
The pyre he burnt in.'—'Nay,' she said, 'the light

That glimmers on the marsh and on the grave.'
And spoke no more, but turn'd and pass'd away.
Miriam, I am not surely one of those
Caught by the flower that closes on the fly,
But after ten slow weeks her fix'd intent,
In aiming at an all but hopeless mark
To strike it, struck; I took, I left you there;
I came, I went, was happier day by day;
For Muriel nursed you with a mother's care;
Till on that clear and heather-scented height
The rounder cheek had brighten'd into bloom.
She always came to meet me carrying you,
And all her talk was of the babe she loved;
So, following her old pastime of the brook,
She threw the fly for me; but oftener left
That angling to the mother. 'Muriel's health
Had weaken'd, nursing little Miriam. Strange!
She used to shun the wailing babe, and doats
On this of yours.' But when the matron saw
That hinted love was only wasted bait,
Not risen to, she was bolder. 'Ever since
You sent the fatal ring'—I told her 'sent
To Miriam,' 'Doubtless—ay, but ever since
In all the world my dear one sees but you—
In your sweet babe she finds but you—she makes
Her heart a mirror that reflects but you.'
And then the tear fell, the voice broke. *Her* heart!

I gazed into the mirror, as a man
Who sees his face in water, and a stone,
That glances from the bottom of the pool,
Strike upward thro' the shadow; yet at last,
Gratitude—loneliness—desire to keep
So skilled a nurse about you always—nay!
Some half remorseful kind of pity too—
Well! well, you know I married Muriel Erne.
'I take thee Muriel for my wedded wife'—
I had forgotten it was your birthday, child—
When all at once with some electric thrill
A cold air pass'd between us, and the hands
Fell from each other, and were join'd again.
No second cloudless honeymoon was mine.
For by and by she sicken'd of the farce,
She dropt the gracious mask of motherhood,
She came no more to meet me, carrying you,
Nor ever cared to set you on her knee,
Nor ever let you gambol in her sight,
Nor ever cheer'd you with a kindly smile,
Nor ever ceased to clamour for the ring;
Why had I sent the ring at first to her?
Why had I made her love me thro' the ring,
And then had changed? so fickle are men—the best!
Not she—but now my love was hers again,
The ring by right, she said, was hers again.
At times too shrilling in her angrier moods,

'That weak and watery nature love you? No!
"*Io* t'amo, *Io* t'amo"!' flung herself
Against my heart, but often while her lips
Were warm upon my cheek, an icy breath,
As from the grating of a sepulchre,
Past over both. I told her of my vow,
No pliable idiot I to break my vow;
But still she made her outcry for the ring;
For one monotonous fancy madden'd her,
Till I myself was madden'd with her cry,
And even that 'Io t'amo,' those three sweet
Italian words, became a weariness.

My people too were scared with eerie sounds,
A footstep, a low throbbing in the walls,
A noise of falling weights that never fell,
Weird whispers, bells that rang without a hand,
Door-handles turn'd when none was at the door,
And bolted doors that open'd of themselves:
And one betwixt the dark and light had seen
Her, bending by the cradle of her babe.

MIRIAM.

And I remember once that being waked
By noises in the house—and no one near—
I cried for nurse, and felt a gentle hand
Fall on my forehead, and a sudden face

Look'd in upon me like a gleam and pass'd,
And I was quieted, and slept again.
Or is it some half memory of a dream?

FATHER.

Your fifth September birthday.

MIRIAM.

And the face,
The hand,—my Mother.

FATHER.

Miriam, on that day
Two lovers parted by no scurrilous tale—
Mere want of gold—and still for twenty years
Bound by the golden cord of their first love—
Had ask'd us to their marriage, and to share
Their marriage-banquet. Muriel, paler then
Than ever you were in your cradle, moan'd,
'I am fitter for my bed, or for my grave,
I cannot go, go you.' And then she rose,
She clung to me with such a hard embrace,
So lingeringly long, that half-amazed
I parted from her, and I went alone.
And when the bridegroom murmur'd, 'With this ring,'
I felt for what I could not find, the key,
The guardian of her relics, of *her* ring.

I kept it as a sacred amulet
About me,—gone! and gone in that embrace!
Then, hurrying home, I found her not in house
Or garden—up the tower—an icy air
Fled by me.—There, the chest was open—all
The sacred relics tost about the floor—
Among them Muriel lying on her face—
I raised her, call'd her 'Muriel, Muriel wake!'
The fatal ring lay near her; the glazed eye
Glared at me as in horror. Dead! I took
And chafed the freezing hand. A red mark ran
All round one finger pointed straight, the rest
Were crumpled inwards. Dead!—and maybe stung
With some remorse, had stolen, worn the ring—
Then torn it from her finger, or as if—
For never had I seen her show remorse—
As if—

MIRIAM.

—those two Ghost lovers—

FATHER.

Lovers yet—

MIRIAM.

Yes, yes!

FATHER.

—but dead so long, gone up so far,
That now their ever-rising life has dwarf'd

Or lost the moment of their past on earth,
As we forget our wail at being born.
As if—

MIRIAM.

a dearer ghost had—

FATHER.

—wrench'd it away.

MIRIAM.

Had floated in with sad reproachful eyes,
Till from her own hand she had torn the ring
In fright, and fallen dead. And I myself
Am half afraid to wear it.

FATHER.

Well, no more!
No bridal music this! but fear not you!
You have the ring she guarded; that poor link
With earth is broken, and has left her free,
Except that, still drawn downward for an hour,
Her spirit hovering by the church, where she
Was married too, may linger, till she sees
Her maiden coming like a Queen, who leaves
Some colder province in the North to gain
Her capital city, where the loyal bells
Clash welcome—linger, till her own, the babe

She lean'd to from her Spiritual sphere,
Her lonely maiden-Princess, crown'd with flowers,
Has enter'd on the larger woman-world
Of wives and mothers.

But the bridal veil—
Your nurse is waiting. Kiss me child and go.

FORLORN.

I.

'He is fled—I wish him dead—
He that wrought my ruin—
O the flattery and the craft
Which were my undoing . . .
In the night, in the night,
When the storms are blowing.

II.

'Who was witness of the crime?
Who shall now reveal it?
He is fled, or he is dead,
Marriage will conceal it . . .
In the night, in the night,
While the gloom is growing.'

III.

Catherine, Catherine, in the night
What is this you're dreaming?
There is laughter down in Hell
At your simple scheming . . .

In the night, in the night,
When the ghosts are fleeting.

IV.

You to place a hand in his
Like an honest woman's,
You that lie with wasted lungs
Waiting for your summons . . .
In the night, O the night!
O the deathwatch beating!

V.

There will come a witness soon
Hard to be confuted,
All the world will hear a voice
Scream you are polluted . . .
In the night! O the night,
When the owls are wailing!

VI.

Shame and marriage, Shame and marriage,
Fright and foul dissembling,
Bantering bridesman, reddening priest,
Tower and altar trembling . . .
In the night, O the night,
When the mind is failing!

VII.

Mother, dare you kill your child?
How your hand is shaking!
Daughter of the seed of Cain,
What is this you're taking? . .
In the night, O the night,
While the house is sleeping.

VIII.

Dreadful! has it come to this,
O unhappy creature?
You that would not tread on a worm
For your gentle nature . . .
In the night, O the night,
O the night of weeping!

IX.

Murder would not veil your sin,
Marriage will not hide it,
Earth and Hell will brand your name,
Wretch you must abide it . . .
In the night, O the night,
Long before the dawning.

X.

Up, get up, and tell him all,
Tell him you were lying!

Do not die with a lie in your mouth,
You that know you're dying . . .
In the night, O the night,
While the grave is yawning.

XI.

No—you will not die before,
Tho' you'll ne'er be stronger;
You will live till *that* is born,
Then a little longer . . .
In the night, O the night,
While the Fiend is prowling.

XII.

Death and marriage, Death and marriage!
Funeral hearses rolling!
Black with bridal favours mixt!
Bridal bells with tolling! . . .
In the night, O the night,
When the wolves are howling.

XIII.

Up, get up, the time is short,
Tell him now or never!
Tell him all before you die,
Lest you die for ever . . .
In the night, O the night,
Where there's no forgetting.

XIV.

Up she got, and wrote him all,
All her tale of sadness,
Blister'd every word with tears,
And eased her heart of madness . .
In the night, and nigh the dawn,
And while the moon was setting.

HAPPY.

THE LEPER'S BRIDE.

I.

Why wail you, pretty plover? and what is it that you fear?
Is he sick your mate like mine? have you lost him, is he fled?
And there—the heron rises from his watch beside the mere,
And flies above the leper's hut, where lives the living-dead.

II.

Come back, nor let me know it! would he live and die alone?
And has he not forgiven me yet, his over-jealous bride,
Who am, and was, and will be his, his own and only own,
To share his living death with him, die with him side by side?

III.

Is that the leper's hut on the solitary moor,
Where noble Ulric dwells forlorn, and wears the leper's weed?
The door is open. He! is he standing at the door,
My soldier of the Cross? it is he and he indeed!

IV.

My roses—will he take them *now*—mine, his—from off the tree
We planted both together, happy in our marriage morn?
O God, I could blaspheme, for he fought Thy fight for Thee,
And Thou hast made him leper to compass him with scorn—

V.

Hast spared the flesh of thousands, the coward and the base,
And set a crueller mark than Cain's on him, the good and brave!
He sees me, waves me from him. I will front him face to face.
You need not wave me from you. I would leap into your grave.

* * * * * * * *

VI.

My warrior of the Holy Cross and of the conquering sword,
The roses that you cast aside—once more I bring you these.
No nearer? do you scorn me when you tell me, O my lord,
You would not mar the beauty of your bride with your disease.

VII.

You say your body is so foul—then here I stand apart,
Who yearn to lay my loving head upon your leprous breast.
The leper plague may scale my skin but never taint my heart;
Your body is not foul to me, and body is foul at best.

VIII.

I loved you first when young and fair, but now I love you most;
The fairest flesh at last is filth on which the worm will feast;
This poor rib-grated dungeon of the holy human ghost,
This house with all its hateful needs no cleaner than the beast,

IX.

This coarse diseaseful creature which in Eden was
divine,
This Satan-haunted ruin, this little city of sewers,
This wall of solid flesh that comes between your soul
and mine,
Will vanish and give place to the beauty that en-
dures,

X.

The beauty that endures on the Spiritual height,
When we shall stand transfigured, like Christ on
Hermon hill,
And moving each to music, soul in soul and light in
light,
Shall flash thro' one another in a moment as we
will.

XI.

Foul! foul! the word was yours not mine, I worship
that right hand
Which fell'd the foes before you as the woodman
fells the wood,
And sway'd the sword that lighten'd back the sun of
Holy land,
And clove the Moslem crescent moon, and changed
it into blood.

XII.

And once I worshipt all too well this creature of decay,
For Age will chink the face, and Death will freeze the supplest limbs—
Yet you in your mid manhood—O the grief when yesterday
They bore the Cross before you to the chant of funeral hymns.

XIII.

'Libera me, Domine!' you sang the Psalm, and when
The Priest pronounced you dead, and flung the mould upon your feet,
A beauty came upon your face, not that of living men,
But seen upon the silent brow when life has ceased to beat.

XIV.

'Libera *nos*, Domine'—you knew not one was there
Who saw you kneel beside your bier, and weeping scarce could see;
May I come a little nearer, I that heard, and changed the prayer
And sang the married 'nos' for the solitary 'me.'

XV.

My beauty marred by you? by you! so be it. All is well
If I lose it and myself in the higher beauty, yours.
My beauty lured that falcon from his eyry on the fell,
Who never caught one gleam of the beauty which endures—

XVI.

The Count who sought to snap the bond that link'd us life to life,
Who whisper'd me 'your Ulric loves'—a little nearer still—
He hiss'd, 'Let us revenge ourselves, your Ulric woos my wife'—
A lie by which he thought he could subdue me to his will.

XVII.

I knew that you were near me when I let him kiss my brow;
Did he touch me on the lips? I was jealous, anger'd, vain,
And I meant to make *you* jealous. Are you jealous of me now?
Your pardon, O my love, if I ever gave you pain.

XVIII.

You never once accused me, but I wept alone, and sigh'd
In the winter of the Present for the summer of the Past;
That icy winter silence—how it froze you from your bride,
Tho' I made one barren effort to break it at the last.

XIX.

I brought you, you remember, these roses, when I knew
You were parting for the war, and you took them tho' you frown'd;
You frown'd and yet you kiss'd them. All at once the trumpet blew,
And you spurr'd your fiery horse, and you hurl'd them to the ground.

XX.

You parted for the Holy War without a word to me,
And clear myself unask'd—not I. My nature was too proud.
And him I saw but once again, and far away was he,
When I was praying in a storm—the crash was long and loud—

XXI.

That God would ever slant His bolt from falling on your head—
Then I lifted up my eyes, he was coming down the fell—
I clapt my hands. The sudden fire from Heaven had dash'd him dead,
And sent him charr'd and blasted to the deathless fire of Hell.

XXII.

See, I sinn'd but for a moment. I repented and repent,
And trust myself forgiven by the God to whom I kneel.
A little nearer? Yes. I shall hardly be content
Till I be leper like yourself, my love, from head to heel.

XXIII.

O foolish dreams, that you, that I, would slight our marriage oath:
I held you at that moment even dearer than before;
Now God has made you leper in His loving care for both,
That we might cling together, never doubt each other more.

XXIV.

The Priest, who join'd you to the dead, has join'd our hands of old;
If man and wife be but one flesh, let mine be leprous too,
As dead from all the human race as if beneath the mould;
If you be dead, then I am dead, who only live for you.

XXV.

Would Earth tho' hid in cloud not be follow'd by the Moon?
The leech forsake the dying bed for terror of his life?
The shadow leave the Substance in the brooding light of noon?
Or if *I* had been the leper would you have left the wife?

XXVI.

Not take them? Still you wave me off—poor roses—must I go—
I have worn them year by year—from the bush we both had set—
What? fling them to you?—well—that were hardly gracious. No!

Your plague but passes by the touch. A little
nearer yet!

XXVII.

There, there! he buried you, the Priest; the Priest is
not to blame,
He joins us once again, to his either office true:
I thank him. I am happy, happy. Kiss me. In
the name
Of the everlasting God, I will live and die with
you.

TO ULYSSES.

I.

Ulysses, much-experienced man,
Whose eyes have known this globe of ours,
Her tribes of men, and trees and flowers,
From Corrientes to Japan,

II.

To you that bask below the Line,
I soaking here in winter wet—
The century's three strong eights have met
To drag me down to seventy-nine.

III.

In summer if I reach my day—
To you, yet young, who breathe the balm
Of summer-winters by the palm
And orange grove of Paraguay,

IV.

I tolerant of the colder time,
  Who love the winter woods, to trace
  On paler heavens the branching grace
Of leafless elm, or naked lime,

V.

And see my cedar green, and there
  My giant ilex keeping leaf
  When frost is keen and days are brief—
Or marvel how in English air

VI.

My yucca, which no winter quells,
  Altho' the months have scarce begun,
  Has push'd toward our faintest sun
A spike of half-accomplish'd bells—

VII.

Or watch the waving pine which here
  The warrior of Caprera set,
  A name that earth will not forget
Till earth has roll'd her latest year—

VIII.

I, once half-crazed for larger light
On broader zones beyond the foam,
But chaining fancy now at home
Among the quarried downs of Wight,

IX.

Not less would yield full thanks to you
For your rich gift, your tale of lands
I know not, your Arabian sands;
Your cane, your palm, tree-fern, bamboo,

X.

The wealth of tropic bower and brake;
Your Oriental Eden-isles,
Where man, nor only Nature smiles;
Your wonder of the boiling lake;

XI.

Phra-Chai, the Shadow of the Best,
Phra-bat the step; your Pontic coast;
Crag-cloister; Anatolian Ghost;
Hong-Kong, Karnac, and all the rest.

XII.

Thro' which I follow'd line by line
  Your leading hand, and came, my friend,
  To prize your various book, and send
A gift of slenderer value, mine.

TO MARY BOYLE.

With the following Poem.

I.

'Spring-flowers'! While you still delay to take
Your leave of Town,
Our elmtree's ruddy-hearted blossom-flake
Is fluttering down.

II.

Be truer to your promise. There! I heard
Our cuckoo call.
Be needle to the magnet of your word,
Nor wait, till all

III.

Our vernal bloom from every vale and plain
And garden pass,
And all the gold from each laburnum chain
Drop to the grass.

IV.

Is memory with your Marian gone to rest,
Dead with the dead?
For ere she left us, when we met, you prest
My hand, and said

V.

'I come with your spring-flowers.' You came not, friend;
My birds would sing,
You heard not. Take then this spring-flower I send,
This song of spring,

VI.

Found yesterday—forgotten mine own rhyme
By mine old self,
As I shall be forgotten by old Time,
Laid on the shelf—

VII.

A rhyme that flower'd betwixt the whitening sloe
And kingcup blaze,
And more than half a hundred years ago,
In rick-fire days,

VIII.

When Dives loathed the times, and paced his land
In fear of worse,
And sanguine Lazarus felt a vacant hand
Fill with *his* purse.

IX.

For lowly minds were madden'd to the height
By tonguester tricks,
And once—I well remember that red night
When thirty ricks,

X.

All flaming, made an English homestead Hell—
These hands of mine
Have helpt to pass a bucket from the well
Along the line,

XI.

When this bare dome had not begun to gleam
Thro' youthful curls,
And you were then a lover's fairy dream,
His girl of girls;

XII.

And you, that now are lonely, and with Grief
Sit face to face,
Might find a flickering glimmer of relief
In change of place.

XIII.

What use to brood? this life of mingled pains
And joys to me,
Despite of every Faith and Creed, remains
The Mystery.

XIV.

Let golden youth bewail the friend, the wife,
For ever gone.
He dreams of that long walk thro' desert life
Without the one.

XV.

The silver year should cease to mourn and sigh—
Not long to wait—
So close are we, dear Mary, you and I
To that dim gate.

XVI.

Take, read! and be the faults your Poet makes
Or many or few,
He rests content, if his young music wakes
A wish in you

XVII.

To change our dark Queen-city, all her realm
Of sound and smoke,
For his clear heaven, and these few lanes of elm
And whispering oak.

THE PROGRESS OF SPRING.

I.

The groundflame of the crocus breaks the mould,
Fair Spring slides hither o'er the Southern sea,
Wavers on her thin stem the snowdrop cold
That trembles not to kisses of the bee:
Come, Spring, for now from all the dripping eaves
The spear of ice has wept itself away,
And hour by hour unfolding woodbine leaves
O'er his uncertain shadow droops the day.
She comes! The loosen'd rivulets run;
The frost-bead melts upon her golden hair;
Her mantle, slowly greening in the Sun,
Now wraps her close, now arching leaves her bare
To breaths of balmier air;

II.

Up leaps the lark, gone wild to welcome her,
About her glance the tits, and shriek the jays,

Before her skims the jubilant woodpecker,
The linnet's bosom blushes at her gaze,
While round her brows a woodland culver flits,
Watching her large light eyes and gracious looks,
And in her open palm a halcyon sits
Patient—the secret splendour of the brooks.
Come, Spring! She comes on waste and wood,
On farm and field: but enter also here,
Diffuse thyself at will thro' all my blood,
And, tho' thy violet sicken into sere,
Lodge with me all the year!

III.

Once more a downy drift against the brakes,
Self-darken'd in the sky, descending slow!
But gladly see I thro' the wavering flakes
Yon blanching apricot like snow in snow.
These will thine eyes not brook in forest-paths,
On their perpetual pine, nor round the beech;
They fuse themselves to little spicy baths,
Solved in the tender blushes of the peach;
They lose themselves and die
On that new life that gems the hawthorn line;
Thy gay lent-lilies wave and put them by,
And out once more in varnish'd glory shine
Thy stars of celandine.

IV.

She floats across the hamlet. Heaven lours,
But in the tearful splendour of her smiles
I see the slowly-thickening chestnut towers
Fill out the spaces by the barren tiles.
Now past her feet the swallow circling flies,
A clamorous cuckoo stoops to meet her hand;
Her light makes rainbows in my closing eyes,
I hear a charm of song thro' all the land.
Come, Spring! She comes, and Earth is glad
To roll her North below thy deepening dome,
But ere thy maiden birk be wholly clad,
And these low bushes dip their twigs in foam,
Make all true hearths thy home.

V.

Across my garden! and the thicket stirs,
The fountain pulses high in sunnier jets,
The blackcap warbles, and the turtle purrs,
The starling claps his tiny castanets.
Still round her forehead wheels the woodland dove,
And scatters on her throat the sparks of dew,
The kingcup fills her footprint, and above
Broaden the glowing isles of vernal blue.
Hail ample presence of a Queen,

Bountiful, beautiful, apparell'd gay,
Whose mantle, every shade of glancing green,
Flies back in fragrant breezes to display
A tunic white as May!

VI.

She whispers, 'From the South I bring you balm,
For on a tropic mountain was I born,
While some dark dweller by the coco-palm
Watch'd my far meadow zoned with airy morn;
From under rose a muffled moan of floods;
I sat beneath a solitude of snow;
There no one came, the turf was fresh, the woods
Plunged gulf on gulf thro' all their vales below.
I saw beyond their silent tops
The steaming marshes of the scarlet cranes,
The slant seas leaning on the mangrove copse,
And summer basking in the sultry plains
About a land of canes;

VII.

'Then from my vapour-girdle soaring forth
I scaled the buoyant highway of the birds,
And drank the dews and drizzle of the North,
That I might mix with men, and hear their words

On pathway'd plains; for—while my hand exults
Within the bloodless heart of lowly flowers
To work old laws of Love to fresh results,
Thro' manifold effect of simple powers—
I too would teach the man
Beyond the darker hour to see the bright,
That his fresh life may close as it began,
The still-fulfilling promise of a light
Narrowing the bounds of night.'

VIII.

So wed thee with my soul, that I may mark
The coming year's great good and varied ills,
And new developments, whatever spark
Be struck from out the clash of warring wills;
Or whether, since our nature cannot rest,
The smoke of war's volcano burst again
From hoary deeps that belt the changeful West,
Old Empires, dwellings of the kings of men;
Or should those fail, that hold the helm,
While the long day of knowledge grows and warms,
And in the heart of this most ancient realm
A hateful voice be utter'd, and alarms
Sounding 'To arms! to arms!'

IX.

A simpler, saner lesson might he learn
Who reads thy gradual process, Holy Spring.
Thy leaves possess the season in their turn,
And in their time thy warblers rise on wing.
How surely glidest thou from March to May,
And changest, breathing it, the sullen wind,
Thy scope of operation, day by day,
Larger and fuller, like the human mind!
Thy warmths from bud to bud
Accomplish that blind model in the seed,
And men have hopes, which race the restless blood,
That after many changes may succeed
Life, which is Life indeed.

MERLIN AND THE GLEAM.

I.

O YOUNG Mariner,
You from the haven
Under the sea-cliff,
You that are watching
The gray Magician
With eyes of wonder,
I am Merlin,
And *I* am dying,
I am Merlin
Who follow The Gleam.

II.

Mighty the Wizard
Who found me at sunrise
Sleeping, and woke me
And learn'd me Magic!
Great the Master,
And sweet the Magic,
When over the valley,

In early summers,
Over the mountain,
On human faces,
And all around me,
Moving to melody,
Floated The Gleam.

III.

Once at the croak of a Raven who
crost it,
A barbarous people,
Blind to the magic,
And deaf to the melody,
Snarl'd at and cursed me.
A demon vext me,
The light retreated,
The landskip darken'd,
The melody deaden'd,
The Master whisper'd
'Follow The Gleam.'

IV.

Then to the melody,
Over a wilderness
Gliding, and glancing at
Elf of the woodland,

Gnome of the cavern,
Griffin and Giant,
And dancing of Fairies
In desolate hollows,
And wraiths of the mountain,
And rolling of dragons
By warble of water,
Or cataract music
Of falling torrents,
Flitted The Gleam.

v.

Down from the mountain
And over the level,
And streaming and shining on
Silent river,
Silvery willow,
Pasture and plowland,
Innocent maidens,
Garrulous children,
Homestead and harvest,
Reaper and gleaner,
And rough-ruddy faces
Of lowly labour,
Slided The Gleam—

VI.

Then, with a melody
Stronger and statelier,
Led me at length
To the city and palace
Of Arthur the king;
Touch'd at the golden
Cross of the churches,
Flash'd on the Tournament,
Flicker'd and bicker'd
From helmet to helmet,
And last on the forehead
Of Arthur the blameless
Rested The Gleam.

VII.

Clouds and darkness
Closed upon Camelot;
Arthur had vanish'd
I knew not whither,
The king who loved me,
And cannot die;
For out of the darkness
Silent and slowly
The Gleam, that had waned to a wintry
glimmer

On icy fallow
And faded forest,
Drew to the valley
Named of the shadow,
And slowly brightening
Out of the glimmer,
And slowly moving again to a melody
Yearningly tender,
Fell on the shadow,
No longer a shadow,
But clothed with The Gleam.

VIII.

And broader and brighter
The Gleam flying onward,
Wed to the melody,
Sang thro' the world;
And slower and fainter,
Old and weary,
But eager to follow,
I saw, whenever
In passing it glanced upon
Hamlet or city,
That under the Crosses
The dead man's garden,
The mortal hillock,

Would break into blossom;
And so to the land's
Last limit I came——
And can no longer,
But die rejoicing,
For thro' the Magic
Of Him the Mighty,
Who taught me in childhood,
There on the border
Of boundless Ocean,
And all but in Heaven
Hovers The Gleam.

IX.

Not of the sunlight,
Not of the moonlight,
Not of the starlight!
O young Mariner,
Down to the haven,
Call your companions,
Launch your vessel,
And crowd your canvas,
And, ere it vanishes
Over the margin,
After it, follow it,
Follow The Gleam.

ROMNEY'S REMORSE.

'I read Hayley's Life of Romney the other day—Romney wanted but education and reading to make him a very fine painter; but his ideal was not high nor fixed. How touching is the close of his life! He married at nineteen, and because Sir Joshua and others had said that "marriage spoilt an artist" almost immediately left his wife in the North and scarce saw her till the end of his life; when old, nearly mad and quite desolate, he went back to her and she received him and nursed him till he died. This quiet act of hers is worth all Romney's pictures! even as a matter of Art, I am sure.' (*Letters and Literary Remains of Edward Fitzgerald*, vol. i.)

'Beat, little heart—I give you this and this'
Who are you? What! the Lady Hamilton?
Good, I am never weary painting you.
To sit once more? Cassandra, Hebe, Joan,
Or spinning at your wheel beside the vine—
Bacchante, what you will; and if I fail
To conjure and concentrate into form
And colour all you are, the fault is less
In me than Art. What Artist ever yet
Could make pure light live on the canvas? Art!
Why should I so disrelish that short word?

Where am I? snow on all the hills! so hot,
So fever'd! never colt would more delight
To roll himself in meadow grass than I
To wallow in that winter of the hills.
Nurse, were you hired? or came of your own will
To wait on one so broken, so forlorn?
Have I not met you somewhere long ago?
I am all but sure I have—in Kendal church—
O yes! I hired you for a season there,
And then we parted; but you look so kind
That you will not deny my sultry throat
One draught of icy water. There—you spill
The drops upon my forehead. Your hand shakes.
I am ashamed. I am a trouble to you,
Could kneel for your forgiveness. Are they tears?
For me—they do me too much grace—for me?
O Mary, Mary!
Vexing you with words!
Words only, born of fever, or the fumes
Of that dark opiate dose you gave me,—words,
Wild babble. I have stumbled back again
Into the common day, the sounder self.
God stay me there, if only for your sake,
The truest, kindliest, noblest-hearted wife
That ever wore a Christian marriage-ring.
My curse upon the Master's apothegm,
That wife and children drag an Artist down!

This seem'd my lodestar in the Heaven of Art,
And lured me from the household fire on earth.
To you my days have been a life-long lie,
Grafted on half a truth; and tho' you say
'Take comfort you have won the Painter's fame,'
The best in me that sees the worst in me,
And groans to see it, finds no comfort there.
What fame? I am not Raphaël, Titian—no
Nor even a Sir Joshua, some will cry.
Wrong there! The painter's fame? but mine, that grew
Blown into glittering by the popular breath,
May float awhile beneath the sun, may roll
The rainbow hues of heaven about it—
There!
The colour'd bubble bursts above the abyss
Of Darkness, utter Lethe.

Is it so?
Her sad eyes plead for my own fame with me
To make it dearer.

Look, the sun has risen
To flame along another dreary day.
Your hand. How bright you keep your marriage-ring!
Raise me. I thank you.

Has your opiate then
Bred this black mood? or am I conscious, more
Than other Masters, of the chasm between
Work and Ideal? Or does the gloom of Age
And suffering cloud the height I stand upon
Even from myself? stand? stood . . . no more.
And yet
The world would lose, if such a wife as you
Should vanish unrecorded. Might I crave
One favour? I am bankrupt of all claim
On your obedience, and my strongest wish
Falls flat before your least unwillingness.
Still would you—if it please you—sit to me?
I dream'd last night of that clear summer noon,
When seated on a rock, and foot to foot
With your own shadow in the placid lake,
You claspt our infant daughter, heart to heart.
I had been among the hills, and brought you down
A length of staghorn-moss, and this you twined
About her cap. I see the picture yet,
Mother and child. A sound from far away,
No louder than a bee among the flowers,
A fall of water lull'd the noon asleep.
You still'd it for the moment with a song
Which often echo'd in me, while I stood
Before the great Madonna-masterpieces
Of ancient Art in Paris, or in Rome.

Mary, my crayons! if I can, I will.
You should have been—I might have made you once,
Had I but known you as I know you now—
The true Alcestis of the time. Your song—
Sit, listen! I remember it, a proof
That I—even I—at times remember'd *you.*

'Beat upon mine, little heart! beat, beat!
Beat upon mine! you are mine, my sweet!
All mine from your pretty blue eyes to your feet,
My sweet.'

Less profile! turn to me—three-quarter face.

'Sleep, little blossom, my honey, my bliss!
For I give you this, and I give you this!
And I blind your pretty blue eyes with a kiss!
Sleep!'

Too early blinded by the kiss of death—

'Father and Mother will watch you grow'—

You watch'd not I, she did not grow, she died.

'Father and Mother will watch you grow,
And gather the roses whenever they blow,
And find the white heather wherever you go,
My sweet.'

Ah, my white heather only blooms in heaven
With Milton's amaranth. There, there, there! a child

Had shamed me at it—Down, you idle tools,
Stampt into dust—tremulous, all awry,
Blurr'd like a landskip in a ruffled pool,—
Not one stroke firm. This Art, that harlot-like
Seduced me from you, leaves me harlot-like,
Who love her still, and whimper, impotent
To win her back before I die—and then—
Then, in the loud world's bastard judgment-day,
One truth will damn me with the mindless mob,
Who feel no touch of my temptation, more
Than all the myriad lies, that blacken round
The corpse of every man that gains a name;
'This model husband, this fine Artist'! Fool,
What matters? Six foot deep of burial mould
Will dull their comments! Ay, but when the shout
Of His descending peals from Heaven, and throbs
Thro' earth, and all her graves, if *He* should ask
'Why left you wife and children? for my sake,
According to my word?' and I replied
'Nay, Lord, for *Art*,' why, that would sound so mean
That all the dead, who wait the doom of Hell
For bolder sins than mine, adulteries,
Wife-murders,—nay, the ruthless Mussulman
Who flings his bowstrung Harem in the sea,
Would turn, and glare at me, and point and jeer,
And gibber at the worm, who, living, made

The wife of wives a widow-bride, and lost
Salvation for a sketch.
I am wild again!
The coals of fire you heap upon my head
Have crazed me. Someone knocking there with
out?
No! Will my Indian brother come? to find
Me or my coffin? Should I know the man?
This worn-out Reason dying in her house
May leave the windows blinded, and if so,
Bid him farewell for me, and tell him—
Hope!
I hear a death-bed Angel whisper 'Hope.'
"The miserable have no medicine
But only Hope!" He said it . . . in the play.
His crime was of the senses; of the mind
Mine; worse, cold, calculated.
Tell my son—
O let me lean my head upon your breast.
'Beat little heart' on this fool brain of mine.
I once had friends—and many—none like you.
I love you more than when we married. Hope!
O yes, I hope, or fancy that, perhaps,
Human forgiveness touches heaven, and thence—
For you forgive me, you are sure of that—
Reflected, sends a light on the forgiven.

PARNASSUS.

Exegi monumentum . . .
Quod non . . .
Possit diruere . . .
. . . innumerabilis
Annorum series et fuga temporum.—HORACE.

I.

WHAT be those crown'd forms high over the sacred fountain?
Bards, that the mighty Muses have raised to the heights of the mountain,
And over the flight of the Ages! O Goddesses, help me up thither!
Lightning may shrivel the laurel of Cæsar, but mine would not wither.
Steep is the mountain, but you, you will help me to overcome it,
And stand with my head in the zenith, and roll my voice from the summit,
Sounding for ever and ever thro' Earth and her listening nations,
And mixt with the great Sphere-music of stars and of constellations.

II.

What be those two shapes high over the sacred fountain,
Taller than all the Muses, and huger than all the mountain?
On those two known peaks they stand ever spreading and heightening;
Poet, that evergreen laurel is blasted by more than lightning!
Look, in their deep double shadow the crown'd ones all disappearing!
Sing like a bird and be happy, nor hope for a deathless hearing!
'Sounding for ever and ever?' pass on! the sight confuses—
These are Astronomy and Geology, terrible Muses!

III.

If the lips were touch'd with fire from off a pure Pierian altar,
Tho' their music here be mortal need the singer greatly care?
Other songs for other worlds! the fire within him would not falter;
Let the golden Iliad vanish, Homer here is Homer there.

BY AN EVOLUTIONIST.

THE Lord let the house of a brute to the soul of a man,
And the man said 'Am I your debtor?'
And the Lord—'Not yet: but make it as clean as you can,
And then I will let you a better.'

I.

If my body come from brutes, my soul uncertain, or a fable,
Why not bask amid the senses while the sun of morning shines,
I, the finer brute rejoicing in my hounds, and in my stable,
Youth and Health, and birth and wealth, and choice of women and of wines?

II.

What hast thou done for me, grim Old Age, save breaking my bones on the rack?

Would I had past in the morning that looks so
bright from afar!

Old Age.

Done for thee? starved the wild beast that was linkt
with thee eighty years back.
Less weight now for the ladder-of-heaven that hangs
on a star.

I.

If my body come from brutes, tho' somewhat finer
than their own,
I am heir, and this my kingdom. Shall the royal
voice be mute?
No, but if the rebel subject seek to drag me from the
throne,
Hold the sceptre, Human Soul, and rule thy Prov-
ince of the brute.

II.

I have climb'd to the snows of Age, and I gaze at a
field in the Past,
Where I sank with the body at times in the sloughs
of a low desire,
But I hear no yelp of the beast, and the Man is quiet
at last
As he stands on the heights of his life with a glimpse
of a height that is higher.

FAR—FAR—AWAY.

(FOR MUSIC.)

WHAT sight so lured him thro' the fields he knew
As where earth's green stole into heaven's own hue,
Far—far—away?

What sound was dearest in his native dells?
The mellow lin-lan-lone of evening bells
Far—far—away.

What vague world-whisper, mystic pain or joy,
Thro' those three words would haunt him when a boy,
Far—far—away?

A whisper from his dawn of life? a breath
From some fair dawn beyond the doors of death
Far—far—away?

Far, far, how far? from o'er the gates of Birth,
The faint horizons, all the bounds of earth,
Far—far—away?

What charm in words, a charm no words could give?
O dying words, can Music make you live
Far—far—away?

POLITICS.

We move, the wheel must always move,
Nor always on the plain,
And if we move to such a goal
As Wisdom hopes to gain,
Then you that drive, and know your Craft,
Will firmly hold the rein,
Nor lend an ear to random cries,
Or you may drive in vain,
For some cry 'Quick' and some cry 'Slow,'
But, while the hills remain,
Up hill 'Too-slow' will need the whip,
Down hill 'Too-quick,' the chain.

BEAUTIFUL CITY.

Beautiful city, the centre and crater of
European confusion,
O you with your passionate shriek for the rights
of an equal humanity,
How often your Re-volution has proven but
E-volution
Roll'd again back on itself in the tides of
a civic insanity!

THE ROSES ON THE TERRACE.

Rose, on this terrace fifty years ago,
When I was in my June, you in your May,
Two words, '*My* Rose' set all your face aglow,
And now that I am white, and you are gray,
That blush of fifty years ago, my dear,
Blooms in the Past, but close to me to-day
As this red rose, which on our terrace here
Glows in the blue of fifty miles away.

THE PLAY.

Act first, this Earth, a stage so gloom'd with woe
You all but sicken at the shifting scenes.
And yet be patient. Our Playwright may show
In some fifth Act what this wild Drama means.

ON ONE WHO AFFECTED AN EFFEMINATE MANNER.

While man and woman still are incomplete,
I prize that soul where man and woman meet,
Which types all Nature's male and female plan
But, friend, man-woman is not woman-man.

TO ONE WHO RAN DOWN THE ENGLISH.

You make our faults too gross, and thence maintain
Our darker future. May your fears be vain!
At times the small black fly upon the pane
May seem the black ox of the distant plain.

THE SNOWDROP.

Many, many welcomes
February fair-maid,
Ever as of old time,
Solitary firstling,
Coming in the cold time,
Prophet of the gay time,
Prophet of the May time,
Prophet of the roses,
Many, many welcomes
February fair-maid!

THE THROSTLE.

'SUMMER is coming, summer is coming.
I know it, I know it, I know it.
Light again, leaf again, life again, love again,'
Yes, my wild little Poet.

Sing the new year in under the blue.
Last year you sang it as gladly.
'New, new, new, new'! Is it then *so* new
That you should carol so madly?

'Love again, song again, nest again, young again,'
Never a prophet so crazy!
And hardly a daisy as yet, little friend,
See, there is hardly a daisy.

'Here again, here, here, here, happy year'!
O warble unchidden, unbidden!
Summer is coming, is coming, my dear,
And all the winters are hidden.

THE OAK.

Live thy Life,
  Young and old,
Like yon oak,
Bright in spring,
  Living gold;

Summer-rich
  Then; and then
Autumn-changed,
Soberer-hued
  Gold again.

All his leaves
  Fall'n at length,
Look, he stands,
Trunk and bough,
  Naked strength.

IN MEMORIAM.

W. G. Ward.

Farewell, whose like on earth I shall not find,
Whose Faith and Work were bells of full accord,
My friend, the most unworldly of mankind,
Most generous of all Ultramontanes, Ward,
How subtle at tierce and quart of mind with mind,
How loyal in the following of thy Lord!

TO W. C. MACREADY.

1851.

Farewell, Macready, since to-night we part;
Full-handed thunders often have confessed
Thy power, well-used to move the public breast.
We thank thee with our voice, and from the heart.
Farewell, Macready, since this night we part,
Go, take thine honours home; rank with the best,
Garrick and statelier Kemble, and the rest
Who made a nation purer through their art.
Thine is it that our drama did not die,
Nor flicker down to brainless pantomime,
And those gilt gauds men-children swarm to see.
Farewell, Macready; moral, grave, sublime;
Our Shakespeare's bland and universal eye
Dwells pleased, through twice a hundred years,
on thee.

APPENDIX AND NOTES

TO THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

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APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

THE following note was written by my father in his copy of Heyne's Homer:—"My father, who taught us Greek, made us—me and my brother Charles—write the substance of Heyne's notes on the margin to show that we had read them; and we followed the same command of his, writing in our Homers, Virgils, and Juvenals, etc., the criticisms of these several commentators. In the little Louth school C. and I learnt—well—I should say absolutely nothing."

My father often expressed a wish that he could find time to translate the *Iliad* into rhythmical prose. Not long after the publication of his *Achilles over the Trench*, with his help I made the following experimental translation of the Sixth Book during some of our long walks through the Sussex lanes round Aldworth, or over the Downs at Freshwater; and when in print it was finally revised by him from the point of view of rhythm, and by my uncle, Professor Lushington, from the point of view of scholarship. The passages in the *Iliad* which I think most struck my father for their beauty of poetic feeling and diction were the two that he translated into blank verse, and the parting of Paris, which he translated into prose (p. 537) as it stands here.

THE SIXTH BOOK OF HOMER'S ILIAD.

The meeting of Diomede and Glaucus—Hector bids his mother pray to Athene—Hector summons Paris to the battle—The farewell of Hector and Andromache—The parting of Paris.

So the dread crash of conflict betwixt the Trojans and Achaians was deserted of the gods.

And many a time the battle drove thro' the plain hither and thither; each host levelling their bronze spears against the other—between the rivers of Simois and of Xanthus.

First Telamonian Ajax, the bulwark of the Achaians, broke a phalanx of the Trojans, and gave light to his people; —striking the man who was noblest among the Thracians, the son of Eussorus, Akamas the mighty warrior.

Him he struck first thro' the ridge of his horse-maned helmet; and pierced him in the forehead, and the bronze point passed thro' the bone, and darkness covered his eyes.

Then Diomede, loud in the battle-cry, slew Axylus the son of Teuthras, who dwelt in stately-built Arisbe; he was rich in the good things of life, and was loved of all men, for he loved all men, dwelling as he did in his house hard by the thoroughfare.

Yet not one of those then could bar bitter death from him, and meet it in his stead; and Diomede took the life of the twain—of him and his fellow Kalesius, who was now his charioteer, and the twain dipt into the underworld.

And Euryalus slew Dresus and Opheltius, and followed after Aisepus and Pedasus, whom a nymph Abarbarea in the former time bare to princely Boucolion.

Now Boucolion was son of the noble Laomedon, the eldest by birth, offspring of his mother's secret love; for shepherding among the flocks Boucolion mingled with Abarbarea in

love's embracement, and she conceiving bare him twin male children.—

And the son of Mekistus loosed their strength and their beauteous limbs by death, and from their shoulders stript off their armour.

And Polypoites, the stedfast in battle, slew Astyalus; and Odysseus put to the death Pidytes a Percosian with his bronze spear; and Teucer, godlike Aretaon.

Then Antilochus, the son of Nestor, smote Ablerus with his flashing spear: and king Agamemnon, Elatus, who dwelt in the height of Pedasus by the banks of the fair-flowing Satnioeis.

And the hero Leïtus overtook Phylakus flying; and Eurypylus put Melanthius to the death.

And now Menelaus, loud in the battle-cry, took Adrestus alive, for his horses being brought to trouble in a bush of tamarisk fled wildly over the plain; and they brake the curved chariot, snapping short the pole, but themselves sped to the city, where the rest in panic likewise whirled onward.

And their lord was rolled forth from the chariot beside the wheel in the dust on his face, prostrate.

Then by him stood Menelaus, the son of Atreus, with long-shadowing spear; and then Adrestus, clasping his knees, supplicated him:

"Take me alive, son of Atreus, and accept a worthy ransom; for large the treasure that is stored in the house of my wealthy sire;—both bronze and gold, and long-laboured iron.

"Out of these my sire would lavishly bestow on thee an untold ransom; if he learnt that I was still living nigh unto the ships of the Achaians."

So he spake and tried to move within his breast the heart of Menelaus, and now he would have straightway given him

over to his servant to lead down to the swift ships of the Achaians; had not Agamemnon come up to meet him running, and, loudly chiding him, spake this word:

"O tender-hearted brother![1] O Menelaus! wherefore dost thou show such pity? Have such benefits indeed been wrought to thine house by Trojans? May no soul of them escape our hands, ay and violent death! not even the babe whom the mother may bear in her womb! let not even him escape! but may all be utterly destroyed together out of Ilios, unsepulchred and unknown!"

Thus speaking the prince turned the mind of his brother, counselling him righteously.

So he thrust the warrior Adrestus aside with his hand, and king Agamemnon wounded him in the loins, and the man fell backward; and Atreides, setting his heel on his breast, drew forth the ashen spear.

Then it was that Nestor cheered on the Argives, shouting aloud:

"O friends, Danaan heroes, servants of Ares! Let none now tarry behind intent on pillage, so that he may go bearing as much as can be to the ships; but let us slay men, and then of a truth at your leisure shall ye strip the dead corpses on the plain."

Thus speaking he aroused the strength and heart of each man. Then had the Trojans again been driven by the Achaians, dear to Ares, up into Ilios, cowed by their lack of courage; but that Helenus, the son of Priam, stood by Æneas and Hector, and spake; and he was the wisest among augurs:

"Æneas and Hector, since the stress of battle lies on you twain most of all the Trojans and Lycians, in that ye are

[1] Possibly a mere form of address, see ix. 252.

the best thro' every enterprise in counsel and in combat; stay here !

"And, moving hither and thither. restrain the people in front of the gates before they, flying, fall into the arms of the women, and become a triumph to their enemies.

"Then when ye have cheered on every phalanx, we will fight with the Danaans, tarrying here, altho' we are exceeding weary; for the need of it compelleth us.

"But do thou, Hector, go to the city; and speak then to thy mother and mine, and let her gather together the aged women to the temple of the clear-eyed Athene in the citadel !

"Let her open with the key the doors of the sacred house; let her lay the robe which seemeth to her the largest and the most beautiful of those that are stored in her palace, and that in which her soul most delighteth, upon the knees of the flowing-haired Athene.

"Let her vow unto her to sacrifice in the temple twelve yearling heifers, which have never felt the goad, so she have mercy on the city and on the wives of the Trojans and their infant children !

"So haply she may hold back from holy Troy the son of Tydeus, the fierce warrior, the mighty man, the creator of panic ; for sure am I that he is even now the mightiest of the Achaians.

"Nay we have never had such dread even of Achilles, the leader of men who they say was born of a goddess ; but this man that is now before us greatly rages, and no one is able to countervail his might."

Thus he spake, and Hector did not disobey the word of his brother, but forthwith sprang all-armed to the ground from his chariot,

And brandishing his two keen spears passed everywhere thro' the army, arousing them to the combat; and he awoke the dread cry of battle.

So they wheeled round and stood front to front with the Achaians; and the Argives gave ground, and paused from slaughter.

For they thought that one of the immortals had descended from the starry heaven to help the Trojans, in such wise they had wheeled themselves round; and Hector cheered on the Trojans, shouting aloud:

"High-hearted Trojans and far-famed allies, be men, my friends, be mindful of your eager prowess!—while I go to Ilios, and speak with our aged councillors, and with our wives, that they pray to the gods, and vow unto them hecatombs."

Thus speaking, Hector of the glancing helmet departed; and the black-hided rim that was outermost round his bossy shield upon either side smote him as he moved on his neck and on his ankles.

Then Glaucus, the son of Hippolochus, and the son of Tydeus, longing for the combat, met in the midmost field betwixt either army; and when they had approached nigh unto one another, first spake Diomede, loud in the battle-cry:

"Who art thou, good sir, of mortal men? for I have never seen thee heretofore in the battle which giveth glory to the warrior; and now thou hast far surpassed all men in thy valour, in that thou hast awaited my long-shadowing spear.

"Yet those who confront me in my might are the children of hapless parents. But if thou art one of the immortals out of heaven, I indeed with the gods of heaven will not do battle.

"Nay, not even the son of Dryas, the strong Lycurgus, lived long; who fought with the gods of heaven:

"He who in a former time chased the nurse-nymphs of maddened Dionysus down the hallowed Nysean mountain; while they all together cast abroad on the ground their vessels of sacrifice, for the man-slaying Lycurgus with his ox-goad chastised them.

"And Dionysus in fear plunged into the wave of the ocean; and Thetis below received him scared into her bosom, such a mighty terror gat hold on him at the angry shout of the warrior.

"Whereat of a truth with Lycurgus the gods who live at ease were aggrieved; and the son of Kronos made him blind, nor did he live long, since of all the immortal gods he was abhorred.

"Nor indeed with the blessed gods am I willing to combat; but if thou beëst of mortal men, who eat the fruit of the earth, draw hither, that thou mayst find full soon the limit of thy doom."

And the glorious son of Hippolochus answered him:

"Great-hearted son of Tydeus, wherefore dost thou ask of my lineage? even as is the generation of leaves, such is that of men.

"The leaves—a wind streweth them on the ground, and the forest flourisheth and produceth others, when the hour of spring descendeth; so one generation of men produceth, and another ceaseth altogether.

"Yet if thou wouldst also learn of me these things, hearken, that thou mayst know my lineage: many a man there is that knoweth it.

"There is a city of Ephyra, in a nook of horse-pastured Argos; and there dwelt Sisyphus who was of all men the

shrewdest; Sisyphus, the son of Æolus, and he begat a son even Glaucus; and Glaucus begat the princely Bellerophon.

"And the gods bestowed on him the beauty of fair manhood, but Prœtus imagined evil in his heart against him; he drave him forth from among his people, since Prœtus was strongest among the Argives; for Zeus had subdued them unto his sceptre.

"Now the fair Anteia, the wife of Prœtus, maddened to mingle with him privily in love's embracement; but in no way could she prevail over the noble nature and wise heart of Bellerophon.

"And she with lying words spake to king Prœtus: 'Mayst thou die, Prœtus, or mayst thou slay Bellerophon who would mingle in love's embracement with me altho' I would not!'

"So she said, and wrath possessed the king when he heard thereof; yet he was loth to slay him, for his soul felt awe at the doing of it; so he sent him to Lycia, and gave him devices of doom, marking on a folded tablet many a deathful symbol.

"And he bad him show them to his father-in-law, in hope that he might perish; but he went to Lycia under the gods' good guidance.

"And when he had come to Lycia, and to the river Xanthus, the king of broad Lycia honoured him with all graciousness; nine days he entertained him, and nine bulls he sacrificed.

"Yet when on the tenth day the rosy dawn appeared, then he questioned him, and asked to see the token; that which he had brought for his own behoof from Prœtus his son-in-law.

"Now after he had received that evil token of his son-in-

law, then indeed he first bad him slay the unconquerable Chimæra, which was of birth divine not mortal; in front a lion, and behind a dragon, and a wild goat in the middle and breathing out the dreadful might of burning fire; and obeying the signs from heaven, he slew her.

"Next he fought with the glorious Solymi—of a truth the fiercest fight, he said, he ever underwent with warriors; and thirdly he smote down the manlike Amazons.

"And another plot full of cunning the king wove for him returning—he chose from out broad Lycia the men that were bravest, and set an ambush; but those no more came homeward; for princely Bellerophon smote them all to the death.

"So when now the king was aware that he was the strong offspring of a god, he kept him there with himself, and gave him to wife his own daughter, and bestowed on him half of all his kingly honours.

"And the Lycians meted unto him a richer portion of land than unto all the others; fair with tilth for corn and with plantations, so that he might dwell therein.

"And his wife bare three children to the wise Bellerophon; Isander and Hippolochus and Laodameia.

"Now Zeus, the sage in counsel, lay with Laodameia; and she bare him the godlike Sarpedon of the brazen helmet.

"But when even Bellerophon likewise to all the gods grew to be hateful, then alone through the Aleïan plain he wandered, eating out his heart, and shunning the track of men.

"And Ares, insatiable of war, slew his son Isander when he fought with the glorious Solymi; and Artemis, goddess of the golden rein, in anger slew Laodameia.

"But Hippolochus begat me, and from him I boast to be descended; and he sent me to Troy, and many a time enjoined me 'ever to excel and to surpass all others, and not to

bring shame on the race of my fathers, who in Ephyra and broad Lycia were ever the bravest warriors.'

"It is from *this* noble race and blood I boast to be descended."

So he spake, and Diomede, loud in the battle-cry, was gladdened.

He planted his spear deep in the rich-pastured earth, and in mild words addressed the shepherd of the people:

"Of a surety thou art bound to me by old ancestral bonds of hospitality; since in former days the godlike Œneus was the host of the princely Bellerophon in his own palace, and kept him twenty days.

"Each also gave to the other fair gifts of hospitality; for Œneus gave a baldrick gleaming with purple, and Bellerophon gave a goblet with double handles and golden, and I left it behind me in my home when I parted.

"Yet I do not remember Tydeus, for he left me still an infant—when in Thebai there perished the people of the Achaians.

"Wherefore now I am thy kindly host in the midst of Argos; and thou mine in Lycia, whensoever I may visit thy people.

"So let us avoid the spears of one another even in the mellay; for many are the Trojans and their noble allies that I may slaughter,—whomsoever the god shall give to me, and whomsoever my feet can overtake in the pursuing; and many too are the Achaians for *thee*, to destroy whomsoever thou art able.

"But let us exchange arms with one another; that these our comrades may likewise know that we proclaim the friendship of ourselves and of our fathers."

Thus they twain held converse; and rushing down from

their chariots, each took the other by the hand, and each plighted his troth to the other.

Then indeed Zeus, the son of Kronos, took away the reason of Glaucus; so that he exchanged his arms with those of Diomede, the son of Tydeus,—golden for bronze—the worth of a hundred bulls for that of nine.

Meanwhile when Hector had come unto the Skaian gates and the oak tree, around him ran the wives of the Trojans, and their daughters, asking him of sons and brothers, kinsmen and husbands.

And he straightway bad them go pray to the gods, all in procession; but grief brooded over many.

Now when at last he came to the fair house of Priam, that was built with polished colonnades (and in it were fifty chambers of polished stonework, ranged near to one another, where the sons of Priam slept by their wedded wives; and there too for his daughters on the other side opposite within the court were twelve roofed chambers of polished stonework, ranged near to one another, where by their chaste wives slept the sons-in-law of Priam), then his noble mother, the giver of kindly gifts, met Hector, leading to him Laodice, the fairest to see of her daughters; and she put her hand in his, and spake to him, and called him by his name:

"Son, why art thou come, leaving the impetuous battle? Surely now the ill-omened sons of the Achaians afflict thee, fighting around the city; wherefore a yearning hath sent thee hither to come and to lift thine hands in prayer to Zeus from the citadel.

"But tarry until I fetch thee the honey-sweet wine, wherewith thou mayst first pour libation to Zeus the father, and to the other immortals; and then thyself shalt gladden thyself if thou drinkest.

"For wine greatly exalteth the courage of the weary heart, even as thou art weary thro' fighting for thy kinsmen."

Then the great Hector of the glancing helmet made answer to her:

"Bring me not the honey-hearted wine, my noble mother, lest thou unnerve me, and I forget my might and my valour; and I fear to pour out to Zeus the sparkling wine with unwashen hands, for it is not at all meet that one polluted with blood, and with mire, should offer prayer to the cloud-girdled son of Kronos.

"But do thou go to the temple of Athene, the Gatherer of Spoil,[1] with sacrificial gifts, gathering together the aged women; and the robe that is to thee the most beautiful, and the largest, of those stored in thy palace, and that one in which thy soul most delighteth—lay that on the knees of the flowing-haired Athene.

"And vow unto her to sacrifice in the temple twelve yearling heifers, which have never felt the goad; so she have mercy on the city, and on the wives of the Trojans, and on their infant children.

"So haply she may hold back from holy Ilios the son of Tydeus, the fierce warrior, the mighty man, the creator of panic; ay, go thou to the temple of Athene, the Gatherer of Spoil, and I will go after Paris that I may call him; if haply, when I speak, he hearken.

"I would that the earth would straightway yawn for him! for Olympian Zeus hath nurtured him to be a mighty curse to the Trojans, and to the great-hearted Priam and to his sons also. O that I might behold him go down into the gates of the house of Hades! then could I say that my soul had forgotten all her joyless misery."

[1] Or stronger, "Goddess of Havoc."—A. T.

So he spake, and she passing to the palace called her attendants; and they gathered together the aged women throughout the city.

Then she herself descended into her fragrant chamber, where were the robes of divers colours, wrought by Sidonian women (whom lordly Alexander himself had brought from Sidon, sailing over the broad seas along the same way whereby[1] he brought Helen the daughter of a noble[2] sire); and taking one of these Hecuba bare it as a gift to Athene—that one which was the fairest with divers colours and which was the largest; and it glittered like a star, and it lay below all the rest.

So she passed on, while many an aged woman hastened after her; and when they came to the temple of Athene in the high city, the fair-faced Theano opened the doors unto them, the daughter of Kisseus, the wife of the horse-taming Antenor; for the Trojans had made her the priestess of Athene.

Then all of them crying aloud lifted up their hands to Athene; and the fair-faced Theano, taking the robe, set it on the knees of the flowing-haired Athene, and with sacred vows she prayed to the daughter of Zeus the mighty:

"Sovran Athene, saviour of cities, fair among goddesses, break thou now the spear of Diomede! and grant also that he himself fall headlong before the Skaian gates!

"That we may forthwith sacrifice in thy temple twelve yearling heifers which have never felt the goad, so thou have mercy on the city, and on the wives of the Trojans, and on their infant children."

Thus she spake in prayer, but Pallas Athene bowed not[3] her head.

[1] Or "on the same voyage when." [2] Or "divinely born."
[3] Threw her head backward in sign of refusal.

Thus they prayed to the daughter of Zeus the mighty; and Hector had passed to the beauteous house of Alexander which he had built along with men who were then the best of craftsmen in all rich-pastured[1] Troy; they wrought for him his chamber, his hall, and his courtyard, nigh to the houses of Priam and Hector in the capitol.

There Hector, dear to Zeus, entered; and in his hand he grasped his spear, eleven cubits in length, and in front glittered the weapon's bronze point, and around it ran a golden ring.

And he found Paris in his chamber, busied about his beauteous armour, his shield and breastplate, and handling his crooked bow.

But Argive Helen sat with her women-servants, bidding those about her work on the glorious broideries.

And Hector, when he saw him, upbraided him in words that were bitter:

"Good sir, thou dost not well to conceive this anger in thine heart: the people waste away, fighting around the city and the towering ramparts; and it was all for thy sake that the war and the battle-shout are kindled about our stronghold.

"Yea, thou thyself wouldst be angered with one whom thou sawest a laggard hanging back from the grievous battle! Up then, lest quickly the city be burnt with a consuming fire!"

And the lordly Alexander spake to him in answer:

"Hector, since thou upbraidest me in reason and not beyond reason, therefore will I speak unto thee; but do thou heed, and hearken unto me.

"Surely not so much in anger, or in indignation against the Trojans, abode I in my chamber; but I would fain abandon myself to sorrow.

[1] Or "deep-soiled."

"And now my wife hath counselled me with soothing words, and hath urged me forth to the combat, and even to myself it seemeth that so it would be better; for victory shifteth now to the one man, now to the other.

"But come then, tarry; let me put on my armour for the battle; or go, and I will follow after, and I deem that I shall overtake thee."

So he said, and Hector of the glancing helmet made no answer; then Helen spake to him in words of comfort:

"Brother of me the wretch without shame! of me the contriver of mischief! of me the baleful!

"Would that on the day when my mother first bare me, an evil hurricane had swept by, and borne me away to a mountain, or to the wave of the loud-roaring ocean where the wave would have been my annihilation,[1] before these evils had happened!

"Howsoever seeing that the gods have thus ordained this bitterness, then would that I had mated with a nobler husband, who could have felt the indignation of men and the multitude of their reproaches!

"But this man hath not any stedfastness, nay nor will have in the future; therefore I believe that he will reap the fruit of his doing.

"Yet come now, enter, and be seated on this couch, O my brother, for the trouble toucheth thine heart nearer than any of us; all thro' me poor wretch, and thro' the guilt of Alexander. We two—for whom Zeus hath ordained an evil destiny; that even hereafter we shall be sung in song for men that are to be."

Then the mighty Hector of the glancing helmet answered her:

[1] Lit. "swept me far off."

"Albeit in love, Helen, do not urge me to be seated, for thou wilt not persuade me; since now all my desire is to go and help the Trojans, who greatly yearn for me in mine absence.

"But do thou arouse *him*, and let him haste himself to overtake me even while I am within the city; for I shall go now to mine own home, that I may look upon my household, and mine own beloved wife, and mine infant son.

"For I do not know if I shall ever return back to them again; or whether now the gods will slay me by the hands of the Achaians."

So Hector of the glancing helmet spake, and departed; and then full soon came he to his house, that goodly dwelling; but he did not find within the halls the white-armed Andromache.

She with her boy and the fair-robed handmaiden was standing on the tower, weeping and wailing; and Hector, when he did not find his noble wife within, stayed on the threshold, and spake among his servant-women:

"Come now, O women, tell me truly! whither hath the white-armed Andromache gone from the palace? Is she gone to my sisters, or to the fair-robed wives of my brethren? or to the temple of Athene, where the other long-haired[1] Trojan women are propitiating the awful goddess?"

And the busy house-dame made answer to him:

"Hector, for thou bad'st me speak altogether truly; she is gone nor to thy sisters, nor to the fair-robed wives of thy brethren, nor to the temple of Athene, where the other long-haired[1] Trojan women are propitiating the awful goddess.

"But she passed to the great tower of Ilios, hearing that the Trojans were sore beset, and that the Achaians mightily

[1] Or "fair-tressed."

prevailed; she departed in great haste toward the rampart, even like a madwoman; and the nurse beareth the boy along with them."

So spake the house-dame; and Hector sped from the palace, back the same way, down thro' the stately streets.

And when, after passing thro' the great city, he had come to the Skaian gates whereby he thought to pass out into the plain, there his richly-dowered[1] wife ran to meet him, Andromache, the daughter of great-hearted Eëtion.

(Eëtion who dwelt beneath wooded Placos in Hypoplacian Thebai, and was king of the Cilicians: and his daughter was wedded to Hector of the bronze helmet.)

Lo then, she came to meet him; and the handmaiden went with her, holding in her bosom the tender boy, the babe like unto a fair star, the darling son of Hector.

Him Hector used to call Scamandrius; but the others Astyanax, "king of the city," for Hector alone upheld Ilios.

Even then he smiled, looking upon his boy in silence; while Andromache stood nigh unto him weeping, and she put her hand into his, and spake, calling him by name:

"Dearest, thy courage will destroy thee, nor dost thou have pity on thine infant son, nor on me the forlorn, who full soon will be thy widow; since full soon the Achaians will massacre thee, all of them falling upon thee.

"But far better would it be for me to descend beneath the earth if I lose thee; for never again will there be comfort for me, when thou—mine own—meetest thy doom, nay, nought but sorrow.

"And I have no longer a father, or a noble mother; since of a truth the lordly Achilles slew my father, and wasted the well-thronged city of the Cilicians, the lofty-gated

[1] "Richly-won."

Thebai. Yea, he slew Eëtion, yet he did not despoil him; for his soul felt awe at the doing of it.

"But he burnt him with his rich-wrought armour, and raised a mound above him, and the nymphs of the mountain, daughters of ægis-bearing Zeus, planted elms around it.

"And those my seven brethren, who dwelt within our palace, in one day—all of them—went down into the gates of Hades; for the swift-footed, lordly Achilles slew them, as they watched by their slow-footed oxen, and by their white-fleeced sheep.

"Moreover my mother—who was queen beneath wooded Placos—her he led captive hither with all his other trophies; and again he freed her, taking a boundless ransom; yet Artemis, who poureth forth her arrows, smote her dead in the palace of her father.

"And now, Hector, thou art to me my father, and noble mother, and my brother, ay and more, my own strong husband! I pray thee now have pity, and tarry here on the tower, lest thou make thy boy an orphan, and thy wife a widow.

"And range our host by the fig-tree, where the citadel is easiest to climb, and the battlement to be scaled: for thrice there have their bravest striven to enter with either Ajax, and the far-famed Idomeneus, and with the sons of Atreus, and the valiant son of Tydeus.

"Whether some one wise in prophecy instructed them; or their own spirit urgeth them on, and commandeth them."

And the mighty Hector of the glancing helmet answered her:

"All these things indeed have I looked to, my wife, but I am in exceeding shame before the Trojans, and the long-

robed [1] Trojan women, if cowardlike I stand apart, and avoid the combat.

"Nor doth my spirit suffer me to avoid it, since I have learnt always to be valiant, and to fight foremost among the Trojans, striving to win great glory for myself and for my father.

"Yea, for well I know in my mind and secret heart, the day will be when sacred Ilios shall perish, and Priam, and the people of Priam of the good ashen spear.

"Yet not so much do the woes to come of the Trojans grieve me, or of Hecuba herself, or of Priam the king, or of my brethren who may fall—many a brave one—in the dust by the hands of our enemies, as thy woes, when some one of the bronze-armoured Achaians shall lead thee away (to be his bride) weeping, and rob thee of thy day of freedom.

"So then thou mayst abide in Argos, and thou mayst weave at the loom at the bidding of another woman; and thou mayst bear the water of Messeïs and Hypereia, all against thy will, and strong necessity will compel thee.

"And haply some one may say, when he seeth thee weeping: 'Lo the wife of Hector, who was the foremost in battle of all the horse-taming Trojans, when they battled around Ilios.'

"So haply some one shall say hereafter, and a fresh sorrow will be thine thro' longing for such a husband to turn away from thee the day of captivity: but may the earth cover me beneath the mound of the dead, before I live to hear thy cry when thou art dragged away!"

So speaking, the glorious Hector leaned forward toward his babe, but back the babe shrank into the bosom of his fair-zoned nurse, crying; troubled at the sight of his beloved

[1] Lit. "trailing-robed."

father, scared at the helmet's glitter, and at the crest of horse-mane—seeing it nod grimly from the top of the helmet.

And his beloved father and noble mother laughed aloud; straightway from his head the glorious Hector took the helmet, and set it upon the ground, glittering.

Then when he had kissed his darling son, and danced him in his hands, he spake in prayer to Zeus, and to the other gods:

"Zeus and all ye gods, grant now that this, my babe, may also become even as I am, a man of renown among the Trojans, like me mighty in strength, and full of power to reign over Ilios, and then men may say, when he returneth from the battle, 'Lo he is far nobler than his father!' and may he bear home blood-dyed trophies of his slaughtered foemen; and may his mother rejoice in her heart!"

So speaking, he laid his babe in the hands of his dear wife, and she received him into her fragrant bosom, smiling tearfully; and her husband pitied her as he looked upon her, and he caressed her with his hand, and spake, and called her by name:

"Darling, be not grieved in thy heart overmuch—for no man shall send me against my fate to Hades; full sure am I that no man hath escaped his doom, nor the bad man, nor even the good, when once he hath come to be.[1]

"But go thou to thine home, and busy thyself about thine household cares, the loom and the distaff; and command thine handmaids to ply their work also.

"But we men will look to the battle—all of us—most of all myself; all we who were born in Ilios."

Thus speaking, the glorious Hector took his horsetail-

[1] "After he has first been born."

crested helmet; and his beloved wife returned homeward, always turning back to look after him, and weeping tear upon tear.

Then quickly she reached the goodly home of Hector, the slayer of men, and she found within many a handmaiden; and she aroused a wailing in all of them. And for Hector still living they wailed in his own home, for they said to themselves that he would nevermore return from the combat, or escape from the strength and the hands of the Achaians.

Nor did Paris linger in his lofty halls, but when he had girt on his gorgeous armour, all of varied bronze, then he rushed through the city, glorying in his airy feet. And as when a stall-kept horse, that is barley-fed at the manger, breaketh his tether, and dasheth thro' the plain, spurning it, being wont to bathe himself in the fair-running river, rioting, and reareth his head, and his mane flieth backward on either shoulder, and he glorieth in his beauty, and his knees bear him at the gallop to the haunts and meadows of the mares;—even so ran the son of Priam, Paris, from the height of Pergamus, all in arms, glittering like the sun, laughing for lightheartedness, and his swift feet bare him.

And straightway he found his godlike brother Hector, even while in act to turn from the place where he had holden sweet converse with his wife; to him first the lordly Alexander spake:

"Fair sir, in very truth I have kept thee back now in thine eagerness by my tarrying; nor came I in due time according to thy commandment."

And Hector of the glancing helmet spake in answer to him:

"Good sir, no man who is just could scoff at thee for thy works in war, for thou art valiant; but of set purpose art thou a laggard, and hast not the will!

"And mine heart grieveth within me, when I hearken to the reproaches heaped on thee by the Trojans who suffer so much for thy sake.

"But let us pass, and we shall make amends for this hereafter, if Zeus ever grant us to consecrate in our halls the cup of freedom to the everlasting gods who dwell in heaven, when we have driven forth out of Troy the well-greaved Achaians."

RETICENCE.

Not to Silence would I build
A temple in her naked field ;
Not to her would raise a shrine :
She no goddess is of mine ;
But to one of finer sense,
Her half sister, Reticence.

Latest of her worshippers,
I would shrine her in my verse !
Not like Silence shall she stand,
Finger-lipt, but with right hand
Moving toward her lip, and there
Hovering, thoughtful, poised in air.
Her garment slips, the left hand holds
Her up-gather'd garment folds,
And veils a breast more fair to me
Than aught of Anadyomené !
Near the shrine, but half in sun,
I would have a river run,
Such as never overflows
With flush of rain, or molten snows.
Often shallow, pierced with light,

Often deep beyond the sight,
Here and there about the lawn
Wholly mute, but ever drawn
Under either grassy brink
In many a silver loop and link
Variously from its far spring,
With long tracts of murmuring,
Partly river, partly brook,
Which in one delicious nook,
Where the doubtful shadows play,
Lightly lisping, breaks away ;
Thence, across the summit hurl'd,
Showers in a whisper o'er the world.

NOTES.

NOTES.

p. 3. *The Lover's Tale.* The original Preface to *The Lover's Tale* states that it was composed in my nineteenth year. Two only of the three parts then written were printed, when, feeling the imperfection of the poem, I withdrew it from the press. One of my friends however who, boylike, admired the boy's work, distributed among our common associates of that hour some copies of these two parts, without my knowledge, without the omissions and amendments which I had in contemplation, and marred by the many misprints of the compositor. Seeing that these two parts have of late been mercilessly pirated, and that what I had deemed scarce worthy to live is not allowed to die, may I not be pardoned if I suffer the whole poem at last to come into the light—accompanied with a reprint of the sequel—a work of my mature life—*The Golden Supper?*

p. 85. *The First Quarrel.* [First published in *Ballads and other Poems*, 1880. Dedicated

to Alfred Browning Stanley Tennyson, born 1878.—Ed.]

Founded on facts told me by Dr. Dabbs, who is the doctor. The poor woman quarrelled with her husband. He started the night of the quarrel for Jersey; the boat, in which he was, struck a reef and went down.

[More than once in his life my father lived much among fisher folk both on the east and on the south coast. Carlyle's comment on the poem was: "Ah, but that's a dreary tragic tale. Poor fellow, he was just an honest plain man, and she was a curious production of the century, and I am sorry for that poor girl too." —Ed.]

p. 96. *Rizpah.* [First published in 1880. For the title see 2 Samuel xxi.—Ed.]

Founded on a paragraph which I read in a penny magazine, *Old Brighton* (lent me by my friend and neighbour Mrs. Brotherton[1]), about a poor woman at Brighthelmstone groping for the body of her son at nights on the Downs. He had been hung in chains for highway

[1] "I told him the story one day at Farringford, knowing it would touch him, and he came up to see my husband and me next day, and asked me to tell it him again: on which I gave him the little penny magazine I found it in. It was an unpretentious account of 'Old Brighton.' Many months after he took me up to his library, after a walk, and read me what he called *Bones*. That was before it was called *Rizpah* and published."

Mary Brotherton.

robbery, and his corpse had been left on the gallows, as was customary in the eighteenth century.

["When the elements had caused the clothes and flesh to decay, his aged mother, night after night, in all weathers, and the more tempestuous the weather the more frequent the visits, made a sacred pilgrimage to the lonely spot on the Downs, and it was noticed that on her return she always brought something away with her in her apron. Upon being watched it was discovered that the bones of the hanging man were the objects of her search, and as the wind and rain scattered them on the ground she conveyed them to her home. There she kept them, and, when the gibbet was stripped of its horrid burden, in the dead silence of the night she interred them in the hallowed enclosure of Old Shoreham Churchyard. What a sad story of a Brighton Rizpah!" (*Old Brighton.*)—ED.]

p. 107. *THE NORTHERN COBBLER.* [First published in 1880.—ED.] Founded on a fact that I heard in early youth. A man set up a bottle of gin in his window when he gave up drinking. A village drunkard, hearing this poem read at a Village Reading, rose from his seat and left the room. "Sally," I suppose, got on his brain, and he was heard to grumble out, "Women knaws too mooch nowadaäys."

p. 108. Verse iii. *fettle and clump* [mend and put new soles to.—Ed.].

p. 109. Verse iv. *squad* [dirt.—Ed.].

p. 109. Verse iv. *scrawm'd an' scratted* [clawed and scratched.—Ed.].

p. 110. Verse v. *weär'd* [spent.—Ed.].

p. 113. Verse ix. *tew* [stew.—Ed.].

p. 114. Verse xi. *num-cumpus*, non-compos.

p. 116. Verse xiv. *snaggy* [ill-tempered.—Ed.].

p. 121. *The Revenge: A Ballad of the Fleet.* [First published in *The Nineteenth Century*, March 1878, under the title of "Sir Richard Grenville: a Ballad of the Fleet"; afterwards published in *Ballads and Poems*, 1880. The line

> At Florés in the Azorés Sir Richard Grenville lay

was on my father's desk for two years, but he set to work and finished the ballad at last all at once in a day or two. He wrote to my mother: "Sir Richard Grenville, in one ship, *The Revenge*, fought fifty-three Spanish ships of the line for fifteen hours: a tremendous story, outrivalling Agincourt." Carlyle's comment on the poem was: "Eh! Alfred, you have got the grip of it."—Ed.]

This tremendous story is told finely by Walter Raleigh in his *Report of the truth*

of the fight about the Isles of Açores this last summer, and by Froude—also by Bacon. "The action," says Froude, "struck a deeper terror, though it was but the action of a single ship, into the hearts of the Spanish people; it dealt a more deadly blow upon their fame and moral strength than the Armada itself." Sir Richard Grenville commanded Sir Walter Raleigh's first colony which went out to Virginia. He was always regarded with superstitious reverence by the Spaniards, who declared for instance that he would carouse three or four glasses of wine, and take the glasses between his teeth and crush them to pieces and swallow them down. *The Revenge* was the same ship of 500 tons in which Drake had sailed against the Armada three years before this sea-fight.[1]

Florĕs is a dissyllable, Azórĕs a trisyllable.

p. 125. Verse vii. *galleons*. Pronounced like "allion" in "medallion" (derived from *galea*).

p. 129. Verse xi. Sir Richard "commanded the master gunner, whom he knew to be a most resolute man, to split and sink the ship, that thereby nothing might remain of glory or victory to the

[1] See R. L. Stevenson, "The English Admirals," in *Virginibus Puerisque*, p. 205: "I must tell one more story, which has lately been made familiar to us all, and that in one of the noblest ballads in the English language. I had written my prose abstract, I shall beg the reader to believe, when I had no notion that the sacred bard designed an immortality for Grenville."

Spaniards, seeing in so many hours they were not able to take her, having had about fifteen hours' time, fifteen thousand men, and fifty-three sail of men of war to perform it withal" (Raleigh).

p. 130. Verse xiii.

'*I have fought for Queen and Faith like a valiant man and true;*
I have only done my duty as a man is bound to do:
With a joyful spirit I Sir Richard Grenville die!

"His exact words were: 'Here die I, Richard Greenfield, with a joyful and quiet mind, for that I have ended my life as a true soldier ought to do, that hath fought for his country, Queen, religion, and honour. Whereby my soul most joyfully departeth out of this body and shall always leave behind it an everlasting fame of a valiant and true soldier that hath done his duty as he was bound to do.' When he had finished these or such other like words, he gave up the Ghost with a great and stout courage, and no man could perceive any true sign of heaviness in him." (Jan Huygen van Linschoten, translated into English 1598.)

p. 131. Verse xiv.

When a wind from the lands they had ruin'd awoke from sleep.

West Indies. "A fleet of merchantmen

joined the Armada immediately after the battle, forming in all 140 sail; and of these 140 only 32 ever saw Spanish harbour."

Gervase Markham wrote a poem entitled *The Most Honorable Tragedie of Sir Richard Grenuile, Knight,* in 1595, and in his postscript to the poem writes: "What became of the *Revenge* after Sir Richard's death, divers report diversly, but the most probable and sufficient proofe sayeth, that within fewe dayes after the knightes death, there arose a great storme from the West and North-West, that all the Fleet was dispersed, as well the Indian Fleet, which were then come unto them, as all the rest of the *Armada,* which attended their arivall; of which fourteen sayle, together with the *Revenge,* and her two hundred Spanyards were cast away uponn the Ile of St. Michaels; so it pleased them to honour the buriall of that renowned ship the *Revenge,* not suffering her to perrish alone, for the great honour shee atchieved in her life-time."

p. 132. *The Sisters.* [First published in 1880. Partly founded on a story, known to my father, of a girl who consented to be bridesmaid to her sister, although she secretly loved the bridegroom. The night after the wedding the poor bridesmaid ran away from home. They searched for her high and low, and at last she was found, knocking at the church door,

in the "pitiless rush of autumn rain," her wits gone —

The great Tragedian, that had quench'd herself
In that assumption of the bridesmaid.

The scene of the picnic was a personal experience in the New Forest. He would often quote as his own belief these lines:

My God, I would not live
Save that I think this gross hard-seeming world
Is our misshaping vision of the Powers
Behind the world, that make our griefs our gains.

ED.]

p. 137. lines 6–10.

A moonless night with storm—one lightning-fork
Flash'd out the lake; and tho' I loiter'd there
The full day after, yet in retrospect
That less than momentary thunder-sketch
Of lake and mountain conquers all the day.

What I saw myself at Llanberis, in North Wales.

p. 148. *THE VILLAGE WIFE; OR, THE ENTAIL.* [First published in 1880.—ED.] The village wife herself is the only portrait that is drawn from life in the Lincolnshire poems.

p. 150. Verse iii. *the fault o' that ere maäle.* By default of the heir male.

p. 155. Verse ix. *'Ouse* [Workhouse.—ED.].

p. 156. Verse xi. *Heäps an' heäps o' booöks.* This really happened to some of the most valuable books in the great library formed by Johnson's friend, Bennet Langton.

p. 159. Verse xv. *Siver the mou'ds.* [However, the earth rattled down on poor old Squire's coffin. —Ed.]

p. 162. Verse xix. *roomlin'* [rumbling.—Ed.].

p. 163. *In the Children's Hospital.* [First published in 1880.—Ed.] A true story told me by Mary Gladstone. The doctors and hospital are unknown to me. The two children are the only characters taken from life in this little dramatic poem, in which the hospital nurse and not the poet is speaking throughout.

p. 164. Verse i. *oorali* or curari (extracted from the *Strychnos toxifera*), which paralyzes the nerves while still the victim feels.

p. 172. *Dedicatory Poem to the Princess Alice.* [First published with *The Defence of Lucknow* in *The Nineteenth Century*, April 1879, afterwards in *Ballads and Poems*, 1880.—Ed.]

p. 172. line 2. *fatal kiss.* Princess Alice (Grand Duchess of Hesse-Darmstadt) died of kissing her child, who was ill with diphtheria (December 14th, 1878).

p. 172. line 11. *Thy Soldier-brother's.* [The Duke of Connaught, married on March 13th, 1879, to Louise Marguerite, Princess of Prussia.—Ed.]

p. 174. *The Defence of Lucknow.*

The old flag, used during the defence of the Residency, was hoisted on the Lucknow flagstaff by General Wilson, and the soldiers who still survived from the siege were all mustered on parade, in honour of this poem, when my son Lionel (who died on his journey from India) visited Lucknow. A tribute overwhelmingly touching.

p. 175. Verse ii. *Lawrence.* Sir Henry Lawrence died of his wounds on July 4th, 1857.

p. 182. Verse vi.

Ever the mine and assault, our sallies, their lying alarms.

3292 feet of gallery alone was dug out. See Outram's account and Colonel Inglis's modest manly record. Lucknow was relieved on Sept. 25th by Havelock and Outram.

p. 185. *Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham.* [First published in 1880.—Ed.] I took as subject of this poem Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham, because he is a fine historical figure. He was named by the people "the good Lord Cobham," a friend of Henry V. As a follower of Wyclif, he was cited before a great council of the Church, which was presided over by Thomas Arundel, Archbishop of Canterbury, and was condemned to be burnt alive for heresy. He escaped from the Tower to

Wales, and four years later was captured and burnt in chains.

p. 186. line 9. '*Dim Saesneg.*' Welsh for 'No English.'

p. 189. line 9. John of Beverley, burnt Jan. 19th, 1414.

p. 189. line 18. *My boon companion.* This passage has reference to the story that Sir John Falstaff was Sir John Oldcastle. For Oldcastle, etc., see Epilogue to 2 *Henry IV.*

p. 190. line 5.

Or Amurath of the East?

[Cf. 2 *Henry IV.* v. ii. 48 :

"This is the English, not the Turkish court;
Not Amurath an Amurath succeeds,
But Harry Harry."

ED.]

p. 193. line 15. *Sylvester.* He became Pope 999.

p. 196. *COLUMBUS.* [First published in 1880.—ED.] Columbus on his return into Spain was thrown into chains.

My poem of *Columbus* was founded on the following passage in Washington Irving's *Life of Columbus*:—"The caravels set sail early in October, bearing off Columbus shackled like the vilest of culprits, amid the scoffs and shouts of a miscreant rabble, who took a brutal joy in heaping insults on his venerable head, and sent curses after him from the island he had so recently added to

the civilized world. The worthy Villejo, as well as Andreas Martin, the master of the caravel, felt deeply grieved at his situation. They would have taken off his irons, but to this he would not consent. 'No,' said he proudly, 'their Majesties commanded me by letter to submit to whatever Bobadillo should order in their name; by their authority he has put upon me these chains; I will wear them until they shall order them to be taken off, and I will afterwards preserve them as relics and memorials of the reward of my services.' 'He did so,' adds his son Fernando in his history. 'I saw them always hanging in his cabinet, and he requested that, when he died, they might be buried with him.'"

p. 197. line 12. *the Dragon's mouth.* [Bocca del Drago, the channel so named by Columbus between the island of Trinidad and South America.—Ed.]

p. 197. line 13. *the Mountain of the World.* [Adam's Peak in Ceylon.—Ed.]

p. 198. line 14. *King David, etc.* [Cf. Psalm civ. 2.—Ed.]

p. 198. line 16. *Lactantius.* [A famous Christian apologist of the fourth century, called by some the Christian Cicero.—Ed.]

p. 200. line 4. *Guanahani.* [Native name of the first island discovered by Columbus.—Ed.]

p. 201. line 16. *Cambalu.* [Cf.

"Cambalu, seat of Cathayan Can."

Paradise Lost, xi. 388.

ED.]

p. 201. line 18. *Prester John.* [Cf. "I will fetch you a tooth-picker now from the furthest inch of Asia, bring you the length of Prester John's foot" (*Much Ado,* II. i. 274). Prester John was a legendary Christian king.—ED.]

p. 202. line 6. *Hispaniola.* [The name given to Hayti by Columbus.—ED.]

p. 203. line 12. *Veragua.* [A Spanish province of New Grenada in South America.—ED.]

p. 206. line 1. *Catalonian Minorite.* [Bernard Buil, a Benedictine monk sent by the Pope to the West Indies in June 1493 as Apostolic Vicar. He continually tried to thwart Columbus.—ED.]

p. 209. *THE VOYAGE OF MAELDUNE.* [First published in 1880. By this story my father intended to represent, in his own original way, the Celtic genius; and enjoyed writing the poem, as he had a genuine love for the peculiar exuberance of the Irish genius.—ED.]

The oldest form of *Maeldune* is in *The Book of the Dun Cow* (1160 A.D.). I read the legend in Joyce's *Old Celtic Romances,* but most of the details are mine.

p. 211. Verse iii. *flittermouse.* A bat.

p. 218. Verse viii. *Finn* was the most famous of old Irish leaders. He was commander of the Feni of Erin and was father of the poet Ossian. He was killed, A.D. 284, at Athbrea on the Boyne.

p. 220. Verse x. [Symbolical of the contest between Roman Catholics and Protestants.—ED.]

p. 221. Verse xi. *St. Brendan* sailed on his voyage some time in the sixth century from Kerry, and some say he visited America.

p. 223. *DE PROFUNDIS.* [Begun at the birth of his son Hallam, Aug. 11th, 1852; first published in *The Nineteenth Century*, May 1880.—ED.]

p. 224. PART II. At times I have possessed the power of making my individuality as it were dissolve and fade away into boundless being, and this not a confused state but the clearest of the clearest, the surest of the surest, utterly beyond words, where death was an almost laughable impossibility, and the loss of personality, if so it were, seeming no alteration but the only true life. (See *The Holy Grail, ad fin.*)

p. 228. *PREFATORY SONNET TO THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.* [First published in the first number of *The Nineteenth Century*, March 1877, afterwards in *Ballads and other Poems*, 1880. —ED.]

p. 228. line 3. *their old craft. The Contemporary Review.*

p. 228. line 7.

Here, in this roaring moon of daffodil.

Written in March.

p. 229. *To the Rev. W. H. Brookfield.* [First published in Lord Lyttelton's Preface to *Brookfield's Sermons*, afterwards in *Ballads and other Poems*, 1880. Dr. Thompson, the Master of Trinity, wrote: "He was far the most amusing man I ever met, or shall meet. At my age it is not likely that I shall ever again see a whole party lying on the floor for purposes of unrestrained laughter, while one of their number is pouring forth, with a perfectly grave face, a succession of imaginary dialogues between characters, real and fictitious, one exceeding another in humour and drollery." —Ed.]

p. 230. *Montenegro.* [Written after talking with Gladstone about the bravery of the Montenegrins, and first published in *The Nineteenth Century*, March 1877, afterwards in *Ballads and other Poems*, 1880.—Ed.]

p. 230. line 12. *Tsernogora* (Black mountain). The Slavonic name for Montenegro.

p. 231. *To Victor Hugo.* [Published in *The Nineteenth Century*, June 1877, afterwards in *Ballads and other Poems*, 1880.—Ed.]

After my son Lionel's visit to him in Paris.

[Victor Hugo thanked my father in the following letter:

MON ÉMINENT ET CHER CONFRÈRE,—Je lis avec émotion vos vers superbes, c'est un reflet de gloire que vous m'envoyez. Comment n'aimerais-je pas l'Angleterre qui produit des hommes tels que vous! l'Angleterre de Wilberforce! l'Angleterre de Milton et de Newton! l'Angleterre de Shakespeare! France et Angleterre sont pour moi un seul peuple comme Vérité et Liberté sont une seule lumière. Je crois à l'unité divine. J'aime tous les peuples et tous les hommes et j'admire vos nobles vers. Recevez mon cordial serrement de main.

VICTOR HUGO.

J'ai été heureux de connaître votre charmant fils—il m'a semblé, que serrer sa main, c'était presser la vôtre.

ED.]

p. 235. *BATTLE OF BRUNANBURH.* [First published in 1880.—ED.] I have more or less availed myself of my son's prose translation of this poem in *The Contemporary Review*, November 1876.

["But tell your father that, when I saw his version of your *Battle of Brunanburh*, I said to myself, and afterwards to others, 'There's the way to render Æschylus' Chorus at last!' unless indeed it might overpower *any* blank verse dialogue" (*Edward FitzGerald to Hallam Tennyson*).—ED.]

p. 244. *Achilles over the Trench.* [First published in *The Nineteenth Century*, August, 1877.—Ed.]

p. 246. *To Princess Frederica on her Marriage.* [Written on the marriage of Princess Frederica, daughter of George V., the blind King of Hanover, with Baron von Pawel-Rammingen at Windsor, April 24th, 1880. Published in 1880.—Ed.]

p. 247. *Sir John Franklin.* [Written in 1877 for the cenotaph in Westminster Abbey, and published in *Ballads and Other Poems*, 1880. —Ed.]

p. 248. *To Dante.* [Written for the sixth anniversary of Dante's birth at the request of the people of Florence, May 14th, 1865, and published in *Ballads and Other Poems*, 1880. The few lines addressed to Dante have a curious history. In 1865 Monckton Milnes (Lord Houghton) met a brother of my father's friend Canon Warburton, and said to him, "Tennyson is not going to the Dante Centenary, but he has given me some lines which I am to recite to the Florentines," and he then repeated the lines. The same evening Canon Warburton met his brother, who observed, "Milnes has just been saying to me some lines which Tennyson has given him to recite at the Centenary, for he is not going himself." He then repeated the lines. Some

fifteen years or so later, my father was talking to the Canon about the probably short-lived duration of all modern poetical fame. "Who," said he, "will read Alfred Tennyson one hundred years hence? And look at Dante after six hundred years!" "That," Warburton answered, "is a renewal of the garland-of-a-day superstition." "What do you mean?" "Your own words!" "What can you mean?" "Don't you remember those lines you gave to Milnes to recite for you at the Dante Centenary!" My father had quite forgotten the lines, whereupon Warburton then wrote them out as far as he could remember them. Shortly afterwards I was able to send the Canon a letter, telling him that my father had recalled the correct version of the poem. My father would say: "One must distinguish from among the poets the great sage poets of all, who are both great thinkers and great artists, like Æschylus, Shakespeare, Dante, and Goethe."—Ed.]

p. 249. [*Tiresias and other Poems* was affectionately dedicated "To my good friend, Robert Browning, whose genius and geniality will best appreciate what may be best, and make most allowance for what may be worst."

Browning had previously dedicated a Selection of his own poems to my father:

To Alfred Tennyson

In poetry illustrious and consummate,
In friendship noble and sincere.

These brother-poets revelled as it were in each other's praise, and were always most loyal to one another. For example, on one occasion Browning was very angry because an anonymous critic had accused my father of plagiarism; and, knowing the wealth of similes and metaphors in his poems and in his ordinary conversation, said to Lecky: "Tennyson suspected of plagiarism! why, you might as well suspect the Rothschilds of picking pockets."—Ed.]

p. 251. *To E. FitzGerald.* [First published in 1885. Written after our visit to Woodbridge, 1876, when we sailed down the river Orwell with Edward FitzGerald. He died before *Tiresias* was published.

His vegetarianism had interested my father, and he was charmed by the picture of the lonely philosopher, a "man of humorous-melancholy mark," with his gray floating locks, sitting among his doves, which perched about him on head and shoulder and knee, and cooed to him as he sat in the sunshine beneath his roses.

FitzGerald wrote to Fanny Kemble of our visit, Sept. 21st, 1876: "Who should send in his card to me last week, but the old poet

himself—he and his elder son Hallam passing through Woodbridge from a town in Norfolk. 'Dear old Fitz,' ran the card in pencil, 'we are passing thrò'.' I had not seen him for twenty years—he looked much the same, except for his fallen locks; and what really surprised me was, that we fell at once into the old humour, as if we had only been parted twenty days instead of so many years. I suppose this is a sign of age—not altogether desirable. But so it was. He stayed two days, and we went over the same old grounds of debate, told some of the old stories, and all was well. I suppose I may never see him again."

The dream, to which allusion is made in the poem, my father related to us in these words:

"I never saw any landscape that came up to the landscapes I have seen in my dreams. The mountains of Switzerland seem insignificant compared with the mountains I have imagined. One of the most wonderful experiences I ever had was this. I had gone without meat for six weeks, living only on vegetables; and at the end of the time, when I came to eat a mutton-chop, I shall never forget the sensation. I never felt such joy in my blood. When I went to sleep, I dreamt that I saw the vines of the South, with huge Eshcol branches, trailing over the glaciers of the North."—Ed.]

p. 251. line 16. '*a thing enskied.*' [See *Measure for Measure*, I. iv. 34.—ED.]

p. 252. line 13. *golden.* [FitzGerald's translation of the *Rubáiyát* of Omar Khayyám.—ED.]

p. 254. *TIRESIAS.* [Partly written at the same time as *Ulysses*; first published in 1885.—ED.]

pp. 260–261. For the close of the poem cf. Pindar, Frag. x. No. i. of the Θρῆνοι:

> Τοῖσι λάμπει μὲν μένος ἀελίου τὰν ἐνθάδε νύκτα κάτω
> φοινικορόδοις τ' ἐνὶ λειμώνεσσι προάστιον αὐτῶν
> καὶ λιβάνῳ σκιαρᾷ καὶ χρυσέοις καρποῖς βέ-
> βριθεν.
> καὶ τοὶ μὲν ἵπποις γυμνασίοις τε, τοὶ δὲ πεσσοῖς,
> τοὶ δὲ φορμίγγεσσι τέρπονται, παρὰ δέ σφισιν
> εὐανθὴς ἅπας τέθαλεν ὄλβος·
> ὀδμὰ δ' ἐρατὸν κατὰ χῶρον κίδναται
> αἰεὶ θύα μιγνύντων πυρὶ τηλεφανεῖ παντοῖα θεῶν
> ἐπὶ βωμοῖς.

p. 263. *THE WRECK.* [First published in 1885. The catastrophe (see viii.) which happened to an Italian vessel, named the *Rosina*, bound from Catania for New York, was the nucleus of the poem. One day, at the end of October, she was nearly capsized by a sudden squall in the middle of the Atlantic. All hands were summoned instantly to take in sail, and all, together with the captain, were actively engaged, when an enormous wave swept the deck of every

living person, leaving only one of the crew who happened to be below. For eight days he struggled against wind and sea, without taking an instant's repose, when the *Marianna*, a Portuguese brigantine, bore down upon her, as she was sinking, and rescued him.—Ed.]

p. 269. Verse vi.

Mother, one morning a bird with a warble plaintively sweet
Perch'd on the shrouds, and then fell fluttering down at my feet.

This happened in the *Pembroke Castle* on our voyage to Copenhagen in 1883 with the Gladstones.

p. 274. Verse xii.

The broad white brow of the Isle—that bay with the colour'd sand.

Alum Bay in the Isle of Wight.

p. 276. *Despair.* [First published in *The Nineteenth Century*, November 1881, afterwards in *Tiresias*, 1885.—Ed.]

p. 278. Verse iv.

See, we were nursed in the drear night-fold of your fatalist creed.

In my boyhood I came across this Calvinist creed—and assuredly, however unfathomable the mystery, if one cannot believe in the freedom of the human will as of the divine, life is hardly worth the living.

p. 287. *The Ancient Sage.* [First published in 1885. My father considered this as one of his best later poems.—Ed.]

What the Ancient Sage says is not the philosophy of the Chinese philosopher Laot-ze, but it was written after reading his life and maxims. ["What I might have believed," my father said, "about the deeper problems of life 'A thousand summers ere the birth of Christ.' In my old age, I think I have a stronger faith in God and human good than I had in youth." Compare with this poem *The Mystic*, written in his boyhood, which records his early intimations, or indistinct visions, of the mind's power to pass beyond the shadows of the world—to pierce beyond the enveloping clouds of ignorance and illusion, and to reach some region of pure light and untroubled calm, where perfect knowledge should have extinguished doubt.

THE MYSTIC

Angels have talked with him, and showed him thrones:
Ye knew him not: he was not one of ye,
Ye scorned him with an undiscerning scorn;
Ye could not read the marvel in his eye,
The still serene abstraction; he hath felt
The vanities of after and before;
Albeit, his spirit and his secret heart
The stern experiences of converse lives,

The linkèd woes of many a fiery change
Had purified, and chastened, and made free.
Always there stood before him, night and day,
Of wayward vary colored circumstance,
The imperishable presences serene
Colossal, without form, or sense, or sound,
Dim shadows but unwaning presences
Fourfacèd to four corners of the sky;
And yet again, three shadows, fronting one,
One forward, one respectant, three but one;
And yet again, again and evermore,
For the two first were not, but only seemed,
One shadow in the midst of a great light,
One reflex from eternity on time,
One mighty countenance of perfect calm,
Awful with most invariable eyes.
For him the silent congregated hours,
Daughters of time, divinely tall, beneath
Severe and youthful brows, with shining eyes
Smiling a godlike smile (the innocent light
Of earliest youth pierced through and through
with all
Keen knowledges of low-embowèd eld)
Upheld, and ever hold aloft the cloud
Which droops low hung on either gate of life,
Both birth and death; he in the centre fixt,
Saw far on each side through the grated gates
Most pale and clear and lovely distances.
He often lying broad awake, and yet
Remaining from the body, and apart
In intellect and power and will, hath heard

Time flowing in the middle of the night,
And all things creeping to a day of doom.
How could ye know him? Ye were yet within
The narrower circle; he had wellnigh reached
The last, with which a region of white flame,
Pure without heat, into a larger air
Upburning, and an ether of black blue,
Investeth and ingirds all other lives.

. ED.]

p. 294. line 16.

The phantom walls of this illusion fade.

Or may I make use of a parable? Man's Free-will is but a bird in a cage; he can stop at the lower perch, or he can mount to a higher. Then that which is and knows—for it has always seemed to me there must be that which knows—will enlarge his cage, give him a higher and a higher perch, and at last break off the top of his cage, and let him out to be one with the only Free-will of the Universe.

p. 296. line 6. '*The Passion of the Past.*' The whole poem is very personal. This Passion of the Past I used to feel when a boy. [See *Far—far—away*, p. 505.—ED.]

p. 296. line 23.

But utter clearness, and thro' loss of Self.

This is also a personal experience which I have had more than once.

[Professor Tyndall wrote:

In the year 1885 . . . were published *Tiresias and other Poems*, by Alfred Lord Tennyson. For a copy of this remarkable volume I am indebted to its author. It contains a poem called *The Ancient Sage*.

My special purpose in introducing this poem, however, is to call your attention to a passage further on which greatly interested me. The poem is, throughout, a discussion between a believer in immortality and one who is unable to believe. The method pursued is this. The Sage reads a portion of the scroll, which he has taken from the hands of his follower, and then brings his own arguments to bear upon that portion, with a view to neutralising the scepticism of the younger man. Let me here remark that I read the whole series of poems published under the title *Tiresias*, full of admiration for their freshness and vigour. Seven years after I had first read them your father died, and you, his son, asked me to contribute a chapter to the book which you contemplate publishing. I knew that I had some small store of references to my interview with your father carefully written in ancient journals. On the receipt of your request, I looked up the account of my first visit to Farringford, and there, to my profound astonishment, I found described that experience of your father's which, in the mouth of the Ancient Sage, was made the ground of an important argument against materialism and in favour of personal immortality

eight-and-twenty years afterwards. I had completely forgotten it, but here it was recorded in black and white. If you turn to your father's account of the wonderful state of consciousness superinduced by thinking of his own name, and compare it with the argument of the Ancient Sage, you will see that they refer to one and the same phenomenon.

> And more, my son! for more than once when I
> Sat all alone, revolving in myself
> The word that is the symbol of myself,
> The mortal limit of the Self was loosed,
> And past into the Nameless, as a cloud
> Melts into Heaven. I touch'd my limbs, the limbs
> Were strange not mine—and yet no shade of doubt,
> But utter clearness, and thro' loss of Self
> The gain of such large life as match'd with ours
> Were Sun to spark—unshadowable in words,
> Themselves but shadows of a shadow-world.

ED.]

p. 299. *THE FLIGHT.* [First published in 1885.—ED.] This is a very early poem.

p. 310. *TOMORROW.* [First published in 1885.—ED.] This story was told me by Aubrey de Vere. [The body of a young man was laid out on the grass by the door of a chapel in the West of Ireland, and an old woman came, and recognized it as that of her young lover, who had been lost in a peat-bog many years before:

the peat having kept him fresh and fair as when she last saw him.—Ed.]

p. 320. *The Spinster's Sweet-Arts.* [First published in 1885.—Ed.]

p. 331. *Locksley Hall Sixty Years After.* [First published in 1886, and dedicated to my mother, partly because it seemed to my father that the two *Locksley Halls* were likely to be in the future two of the most historically interesting of his poems, as descriptive of the tone of the age at two distant periods of his life: partly because the following four lines were written immediately after the death of my brother, and described his chief characteristics:

Truth, for Truth is Truth, he worshipt, being true as he was brave;
Good, for Good is Good, he follow'd, yet he look'd beyond the grave!
Truth for Truth, and Good for Good! The Good, the True, the Pure, the Just!
Take the charm "For ever" from them and they crumble into dust. Ed.]

A dramatic poem, and the Dramatis Personæ are imaginary. Since it is so much the fashion in these days to regard each poem and story as a story of the poet's life, or part of it, may I not be allowed to remind my readers of the possibility, that some event which comes to the poet's knowledge, some hint flashed from another mind, some thought or feeling

arising in his own, or some mood coming—he knows not whence or how—may strike a chord from which a poem evolves its life, and that this to other eyes may bear small relation to the thought or fact or feeling to which the poem owes its birth, whether the tenor be dramatic or given as a parable?

Gladstone says: "The method in the old *Locksley Hall* and the new is the same. In each the maker is outside his work, and in each we have to deal with it as strictly 'impersonal'" (*Nineteenth Century*, Jan. 1887).

p. 332. line 5. *In the hall there hangs a painting.* These four lines were the nucleus of the poem, and were written fifty years ago.

p. 335. line 1.

Cold upon the dead volcano sleeps the gleam of dying day.

[My father always quoted this line as the most imaginative in the poem.—Ed.]

p. 339. line 10. *peasants maim.* The modern Irish cruelties.

p. 342. line 3. *Plowmen, Shepherds, etc.* and the three following verses show that the hero does not (as has been said) by any means dislike the democracy.

p. 345. line 6. *Jacquerie.* Originally a revolt in 1358 against the Picardy nobles; and afterwards applied to insurrections of the mob.

This and the eight following verses show that he is not a pessimist, I think.

p. 348. line 1. *Bringer home.*

ἔσπερε, πάντα φέρεις·
φέρεις ὄϊν, φέρεις αἶγα,
φέρεις ματέρι παῖδα.

Sappho.

p. 357. *Prologue to General Hamley.* [First published in 1885.—Ed.] Written from Aldworth, Blackdown.

p. 358. line 8. *Tel-el-Kebir.* [Where Lord Wolseley defeated the Egyptians under Arabi Pasha, September 13th, 1882.—Ed.]

p. 359. *The Charge of the Heavy Brigade at Balaclava.* [First published in *Macmillan's Magazine*, March 1882; afterwards, in 1885, in *Tiresias*.—Ed.] Written at the request of Mr. Kinglake. (See note at end of poem.) An officer, who was in this charge, said that it was "the finest excitement" he had ever known, and that "gambling and horse-racing were nothing to it."

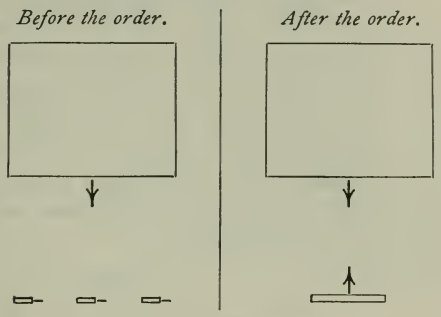
[The following is what Kinglake wrote for my father at the time:—

1st Instant.

Scarlett seeing the enemy and preparing to confront him.

Scarlett is marching eastward with his "300" in marching order, when, casting his

eyes towards the heights on his left, *i.e.* towards the north, he sees a host of Russians breaking over the sky-line and presently advancing downhill towards the south. Thereupon he instantly gives the order, "Left wheel into line!" The effect of this is to make the "300" no longer show their flank to the enemy, but confront him.



One peculiarity attending that 1st Instant was that apparently the idea of *not* accepting battle on terms of one to ten did not occur to anybody!

2ND INSTANT.

Suspense.

The acreage of Russian horsemen is descending the hill-side at a trot, and the "300" confronting them are deliberately dressing their line, the regimental officers directing the process *with their faces to their men as in a*

barrack yard. This in the presence of a vast mass of cavalry coming down the hill-side to assail them was an interesting and, as I imagine, a rare phenomenon.

3RD INSTANT.

The Russian halt and Scarlett's determination.

The Russians slacken and halt. Scarlett, all things considered, determines that he will *lead* the charge, and for that purpose takes the usual course, *i.e.* places himself in front of the line with his aide-de-camp, followed by his trumpeter and one orderly. Orders to charge. His passage over the intervening space marked only, so far as observers could tell, by one shout of "Come on!" and one wave of his sword.

4TH INSTANT.

The combat maintained by the four.

This personal, and like something mediæval, and *not* yet involving the tumult of battle. The four penetrate so deeply into the column as to be secure from the approaching crash that will follow when their own line comes up.

5TH INSTANT.

The crashing charge of the Greys and one squadron of the Inniskillingers.

6TH INSTANT.

The fight within the column.

The 2nd squadron of the Inniskillings,

hearing on the outside their comrades of the 1st squadron, crash on the right.

ED.]

p. 365. *EPILOGUE.* Lines 6, 7.

'I will strike,' said he,
'The stars with head sublime.'

See Hor. *Od.* I. i. 35, 36:

Quodsi me lyricis vatibus inseres,
Sublimi feriam sidera vertice.

p. 367. *TO VIRGIL.* [Was written at the request of the Mantuans for the nineteenth centenary of Virgil's death, and first published in *The Nineteenth Century*, September 1882, and afterwards in *Tiresias*, 1885. There was a curious misprint in the first printed copies of the poem: "Thou that singest . . . *tithe* and vineyard" instead of "tilth and vineyard."—ED.]

p. 369. Verse ix.

sunder'd once from all the human race.

[Cf.

Et penitus toto divisos orbe Britannos.
Virg. *Ecl.* i. 67.

ED.]

p. 369. Verse x. *Mantovano*, Mantuan. [Cf. Dante, *Purg.* vi. 74.—ED.]

p. 370. *THE DEAD PROPHET.* [First published in *Tiresias*, 1885.—ED.] About no particular prophet.

[My father said when writing this poem:

"While I live the OWLS!
When I die the GHOULS!!"

He had a strong conviction that the world likes to know about the roughnesses, eccentricities, and defects of a man of genius, rather than what he really is. At this time he said of Mr. and Mrs. Carlyle: "I am sure that Froude is wrong. I saw a great deal of them. They were always 'chaffing' one another, and they could not have done that if they had got on so 'badly together' as Froude thinks."—ED.]

p. 376. *EARLY SPRING.* [An early poem, slightly altered, first published in *The Youth's Companion*, Boston, U.S.A., 1884, afterwards in *Tiresias*, 1885. Mary Brotherton, in the following lines on my father, written after his death, well expressed his attitude toward Nature:—

"He look'd on Nature's lowest thing
For some sublime God's word;
And lived for ever listening
Lest God should speak unheard."

ED.]

p. 379. *PREFATORY POEM TO MY BROTHER'S SONNETS.* [Published in 1880.—ED.] Addressed to my brother, Charles Tennyson Turner, who died at Cheltenham on April 25th, 1879, after a

life spent with his wife among his parishioners in Grasby, Lincolnshire.

[His sonnets, *Letty's Globe*, *Time and Twilight*, *On seeing a child blush on his first view of a corpse*, *The Buoy Bell*, *The School-boy's Dream*, *On shooting a swallow in early youth*, had in my father's judgment all the tenderness of the Greek epigram, and he ranked sonnets such as *Time and Twilight*, and *The Holy Emerald*, among the noblest in the language.

My uncle with his aquiline nose, dark eyes and black hair was very like my father, and Thackeray seeing him in middle life called him a "Velasquez tout craché." No one who reads his poems can fail to see the "alma beata e bella" breathing through them. The poem was written as a preface to the *Collected Sonnets*, published in 1880.—ED.]

p. 381. '*FRATER AVE ATQUE VALE.*' [Written in 1880 when my father and I visited Sirmione, the peninsula of Catullus on the Lago di Garda. He rejoiced in the old olives, the old ruins, and the greensward stretching down to the blue lake with the mountains beyond. First published in *The Nineteenth Century*, March 1883, and afterwards in *Tiresias and other Poems*, 1885.—ED.]

p. 381. line 4. *where the purple flowers grow.* [Refers to a very beautiful Iris with deep purple

flowers (*Iris benacensis*) which grows beneath the ruins near the Lake of Garda.—Ed.]

p. 382. *Helen's Tower.* [Written in 1861 for Lord Dufferin in answer to the following letter :—

Clandeboy, Belfast, *Sept. 24th*, 1861.

My dear Mr. Tennyson—I wonder if you will think me very presumptuous for doing what at last, after many months' hesitation, I have determined to do.

You must know that here in my park in Ireland there rises a high hill, from the top of which I look down not only on an extensive tract of Irish land, but also on St. George's Channel, a long blue line of Scotch coast, and the mountains of the Isle of Man.

On the summit of this hill I have built an old-world tower which I have called after my mother "Helen's Tower."

In it I have placed on a golden tablet the birthday verses which my mother wrote to me on the day I came of age, and I have spared no pains in beautifying it with all imaginable devices. In fact my tower is a little "Palace of Art." Beneath is a rough outline of its form and situation.

Now there is only one thing wanting to make it a perfect little gem of architecture and decoration and that is "*a voice.*" It is now ten years since it was built and all that time it has stood silent. Yet if he chose there is one person in the world able to endow it with this priceless gift, and

by sending me some little short distich for it to crown it for ever with a glory it cannot otherwise obtain, and render it a memorial of the personal friendship which its builder felt for the great poet of our age.—Yours ever,

DUFFERIN.

Afterwards published in *Tiresias and other Poems*, 1885.—ED.]

p. 382. line 12. *earth's recurring Paradise.* The fancy of some poets and theologians that Paradise is to be the renovated earth.

pp. 383–385. *EPITAPHS ON LORD STRATFORD DE REDCLIFFE, GENERAL GORDON, AND CAXTON.* [Published in *Tiresias and other Poems*, 1885. The epitaph on General Gordon first published in The *Times*, May 7, 1885, was written in answer to a request made by the American poet Whittier. In 1878 Gordon called on my father in London. Having learnt that my father was alone, he glided spirit-like into the room, and said in a solemn voice, "Mr. Tennyson, I want you to do something for our young soldiers. You alone are the man who can do it. We want training-homes for them all over England." The General soon after this was sent to Mauritius —and then nothing more could be done: until the Gordon Boys' Home was initiated by my father, and founded by the King after Gordon's death and in his memory.—ED.]

p. 386. *To the Duke of Argyll.* [Written when the Duke resigned the office of Privy Seal (1881) on account of his vehement opposition to Gladstone's Irish Bill. First published in *Tiresias and other Poems*, 1885.—Ed.]

p. 387. *Hands all Round.* When this poem was recast and published in 1882 it was sung all over the Empire on the Queen's birthday. [Set to music by my mother; arranged by Sir Charles Stanford. Edward FitzGerald writes of the first edition (vol. i. 648–650) that my father said to him: "I know I wrote these lines with the Tears running down my Cheeks." —Ed.]

p. 389. *Freedom.* [First published in the New York *Independent*, 1884, and in *Macmillan's Magazine*, December 1884, afterwards in *Tiresias and other Poems*, 1885.—Ed.]

"It were good that men in their innovations should follow the example of Time itself, which indeed innovateth greatly but quietly, and by degrees, scarce to be perceived. . . . It is good also not to try experiments in States except the necessity be urgent, or the utility evident: and well to beware that it be the reformation that draweth on the change, and not the desire of change that pretendeth the change" (Bacon).

p. 389. Verse i. *pillar'd Parthenon.* Misprinted "column'd Parthenon."

p. 392. *To H.R.H. Princess Beatrice.* On her marriage with Prince Henry of Battenberg, July 23rd, 1885 [and first published in the *Times*, July 23rd, 1885, and afterwards in *Tiresias and other Poems*. My father sent the poem to Queen Victoria, and she wrote to him about the wedding as follows:—

From the Queen

Osborne, *Aug. 7th*, 1885.

Dear Lord Tennyson— . . . As I gazed on the happy young couple, and on my two sons Alfred and Arthur and their bonnie bairns, I could not but feel sad in thinking that their hour of trial might come, and earnestly prayed God would spare my sweet Beatrice and the husband she so truly loves and confides in, for long, long to each other.

Till sixty-one no real inroad of any kind had been made in our circle, and how heavy has God's hand been since then on me!

Mother, husband, children, truest friends, all have been taken from me, and yet I must "still endure," and I shall try to do so. Your beautiful lines have been greatly admired.

I wish you could have *seen* the wedding, for every one says it was the prettiest they ever saw. The simple, pretty, little village church, all decorated with flowers, the sweet young bride, the handsome young husband, the ten bridesmaids, six of them quite children with flowing

fair hair, the brilliant sunshine and the blue sea, all made up pictures not to be forgotten.—Believe me always yours affectionately,

V. R. I.

And he answered thus:

ALDWORTH, *Aug. 9th*, 1885.

. . . . . .

As to the sufferings of this momentary life, we can but trust that in some after-state, when we see clearer, we shall thank the Supreme Power for having made us, thro' these, higher and greater beings.

Still it surely cannot be unlawful to pray that our children, and our children's children, may pass thro' smoother waters to the other shore.

The wedding must have been beautiful, the Peace of Heaven seemed on the day.

. . . . . .

Your Majesty's affectionate subject,

TENNYSON.

ED.]

p. 392. line 1. *Two Suns.* [Sir George Darwin writes to me: "There are in the heavens many double Suns—twin Suns revolving about one another. We may well imagine that such systems may have planets attached to them, of course invisible to us. Each of such planets would have a double day, one arising from the illumination of one Sun, and the other from the other Sun. Your father was not concerned with computing the orbit of such a planet, moving under the attraction of two centres

stead of one as in our case. The conception seems to me very fine, and fits in admirably with the rest of the poem."—ED.]

p. 393. *THE FLEET.* [First published in the *Times* April 23rd, 1885, afterwards in *Locksley Hall Sixty Years After*, 1886.—ED.]

p. 395. *OPENING OF THE INDIAN AND COLONIAL EXHIBITION BY THE QUEEN*, May 4th, 1886. [First published in *Locksley Hall Sixty Years After*, 1886. This ode was written under the shadow of a great grief, as his son Lionel was very ill in India, and died on April 20th.—ED.]

p. 398. *POETS AND THEIR BIBLIOGRAPHIES.* [First published in *Tiresias and other Poems*, 1885. —ED.]

p. 399. [*DEMETER AND OTHER POEMS* was dedicated to Lord Dufferin as a tribute of affection and of gratitude for the unremitting kindness shown by Lady Dufferin and himself to my brother Lionel during his last fatal illness in India. From earliest childhood Lionel's had always been an affectionate and beautiful nature. None of his age in the India Office, where he was for some time a clerk, knew more about India, and I have not a few letters from his chiefs, speaking in the warmest terms of his ability, and of the high place

that, had he lived, he would have made for himself. While shooting in Assam he caught jungle fever. On his return to Calcutta he fell dangerously ill, and never recovered. He started for home at the beginning of April, and passed away peacefully at three in the afternoon of April 20th. The burial service was at nine that same evening, under a great silver moon. The ship stopped off Perim, and the coffin was lowered into a phosphorescent sea.—Ed.]

p. 401. *To the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava.* [First published in 1889. See *Memoir*, vol. ii. pp. 322–323.—Ed.]

p. 405. *On the Jubilee of Queen Victoria.* [Published in pamphlet form and in *Macmillan's Magazine*, April 1887, on the fiftieth anniversary of the Queen's coronation.—Ed.]

p. 409. *To Professor Jebb.* [First published in 1889. My father met Jebb at Cambridge for the first time in 1872. He gave him the following Sapphic in English with the Greek cadence, because Jebb admired it:—

Faded ev'ry violet, all the roses;
Gone the glorious promise; and the victim,
Broken in this anger of Aphrodite,
Yields to the victor.

What impressed my father most in this visit to Cambridge was the change in the relations between don and undergraduate. While he

was keeping his terms (1828–1831) there was "a great gulf fixed" between the teacher and the taught. As he said to Dr. Butler, the present Master of Trinity: "There was a want of love in Cambridge then;" and in consequence he had written in 1830 these denunciatory lines:

Therefore your Halls, your ancient Colleges,
Your portals statued with old kings and queens,
Your gardens, myriad-volumed libraries,
Wax-lighted chapels, and rich carven screens,
Your doctors, and your proctors, and your deans,
Shall not avail you, when the Day-beam sports
New-risen o'er awaken'd Albion. No!
Nor yet your solemn organ-pipes that blow
Melodious thunders thro' your vacant courts
At noon and eve, because your manner sorts
Not with this age wherefrom ye stand apart,
Because the lips of little children preach
Against you, you that do profess to teach
And teach us nothing, feeding not the heart.

ED.]

p. 410. *DEMETER AND PERSEPHONE.* [First published in 1889. Cf. the Homeric *Hymn to Demeter*; Hesiod, *Theog.* 912 ff.; and Ovid, *Met.* v. 341, and *Fasti*, iv. 419 ff. The poem was written at my request, because I knew that my father considered Demeter one of the most beautiful types of womanhood. He said:

"I will write it, but when I write an antique like this I must put it into a frame—something modern about it. It is no use giving a mere *réchauffé* of old legends." He would give as an example of the frame:

Yet I, Earth-Goddess, am but ill-content

. . . . . .

And all the Shadow die into the Light.

To Signor Francisco Clementi, who translated this poem into Italian and told my father that the Italian youth were grateful to him and had profited much by his work, he wrote, Feb. 4th, 1891: "I send you my best thanks for your kind and generous commentary. If I have done any good to your countrymen or others, by what I have written, *that* is more grateful to me than any modern fame, which to a man nearing 82—for I was born in 1809—seems somewhat pale and colourless." —Ed.]

p. 412. lines 12, 13. *gave thy breast*, the breast which had suckled thee.

p. 413. lines 15–18.

'Where'? and I heard one voice from all the three
'We know not, for we spin the lives of men,
And not of Gods, and know not why we spin!
There is a Fate beyond us.'

Cf.

'Talia saecla,' suis dixerunt, 'currite,' fusis
Concordes stabili fatorum numine Parcae.
Virgil, *Ecl.* iv. 46.

p. 415. line 11. *bear us down.* [Cf. Aesch. *Prom. Vinct.* 907, etc.:

ἦ μὴν ἔτι Ζεύς, καίπερ αὐθάδης φρενῶν
ἔσται ταπεινός, κ.τ.λ.

ED.]

p. 417. *OWD ROÄ.* [First published in 1889.—ED.] I read in one of the daily papers of a child saved by a black retriever from a burning house. The details in this story are, of course, mine. When the *Spectator*, reviewing *The Northern Farmer, etc.*, remarked that I must have found these poems difficult to accomplish, as being out of my way, I wrote to a friend that they were easy enough, for I knew the *men*—by which I meant the kind of men and their manner of speaking, not any particular individual.

p. 426. line 1. *Or like tother Hangel, etc.* See Judges xiii. 20.

p. 429. *VASTNESS.* [First published in *The Nineteenth Century*, November 1885; afterwards in *Demeter and other Poems*, 1889.—ED.] The last line means "What matters anything in this world without faith in the immortality of the soul and of Love?"

p. 434. *The Ring.* [First published in 1889.—Ed.]

p. 436. lines 8-15.

the Voices of the day
Are heard across the Voices of the dark.
No sudden heaven, nor sudden hell, for man,
But thro' the Will of One who knows and rules—
And utter knowledge is but utter love—
Æonian Evolution, swift or slow,
Thro' all the Spheres—an ever opening height,
An ever lessening earth.

[My father would quote these lines as giving his own belief that "the after-life is one of progress."—Ed.]

p. 438. line 2.

The lonely maiden-Princess of the wood.

See *The Day-Dream*, vol. i. p. 368.

p. 442. line 15.

A thousand squares of corn and meadow, far
As the gray deep, a landscape which your eyes
Have many a time ranged over when a babe.

[The view from Aldworth.—Ed.]

p. 455. lines 11, 12.

A red mark ran
All round one finger.

Mr. Lowell told me this legend, or something like it, of a house near where he had once lived.

[In answer to a letter respecting the legend Mr. Lowell writes: "I shall only be too glad

to be in any the remotest way the moving cause of a new poem by one to whom we are all so nobly indebted. Henry James, by the way, to whom I told the legend many years ago, made it the subject of a short story. But this would be no objection, for the poet would make it his own by right of eminent domain."—ED.]

p. 458. FORLORN. [An early poem, first published in 1889.—ED.]

p. 463. HAPPY [First published in 1889. On the Power of Spiritual Love, and was suggested by the following letter in the *Isle of Wight County Press* from the Rev. Edward Boucher-James, Vicar of Carisbrooke.

"Dean Milman has remarked that the protection and care afforded by the Church to this blighted race of lepers was among the most beautiful of its offices during the Middle Ages. The leprosy of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries was supposed to be a legacy of the crusades, but was in all probability the offspring of meagre and unwholesome diet, miserable lodging and clothing, physical and moral degradation. The services of the Church in the seclusion of these unhappy sufferers were most affecting. The stern duty of looking to the public welfare is tempered with exquisite compassion for the victims of this loathsome disease. The ritual for the sequestration of the leprous differed little from

the burial service. After the leper had been sprinkled with holy water, the priest conducted him into the church, the leper singing the psalm 'Libera me, Domine,' and the crucifix and bearer going before. In the church a black cloth was stretched over two trestles in front of the altar, and the leper leaning at its side devoutly heard mass. The priest, taking up a little earth in his cloak, threw it on one of the leper's feet, and put him out of the church, if it did not rain too heavily; took him to his hut in the midst of the fields, and then uttered the prohibitions: 'I forbid you entering the church . . . or entering the company of others. I forbid you quitting your home without your leper's dress.' He concluded: 'Take this dress, and wear it in token of humility; take these gloves, take this clapper, as a sign that you are forbidden to speak to any one. You are not to be indignant at being thus separated from others, and as to your little wants, good people will provide for you, and God will not desert you.' Then in this old ritual follow these sad words: 'When it shall come to pass that the leper shall pass out of this world, he shall be buried in his hut, and not in the churchyard.' At first there was a doubt whether wives should follow their husbands who had been leprous, or remain in the world and marry again. The Church decided that the marriage-tie

was indissoluble, and so bestowed on these unhappy beings this immense source of consolation. With a love stronger than this living death, lepers were followed into banishment from the haunts of men by their faithful wives. Readers of Sir J. Stephen's *Essays on Ecclesiastical Biography* will recollect the description of the founder of the Franciscan Order, how, controlling his involuntary disgust, St. Francis of Assisi washed the feet and dressed the sores of the lepers, once at least reverently applying his lips to their wounds."

This ceremony of *quasi*-burial varied considerably at different times and in different places. In some cases a grave was dug, and the leper's face was often covered during the service.—ED.]

p. 473. *To Ulysses.* [First published in 1889. My father used to say: "Gifford Palgrave is the cleverest man I ever saw."—ED.]

Ulysses was the title of a volume of Palgrave's essays. He died at Monte Video before seeing my poem.

p. 474. Verse vii.

Or watch the waving pine which here
The warrior of Caprera set.

A Wellingtonia which Garibaldi planted when at Farringford in April 1864. Garibaldi said to me, alluding to his barren island (Caprera), "I wish I had your trees."

[*Extract from Letter to the Duke of Argyll.*

FARRINGFORD.

Did you hear Garibaldi repeat any Italian poetry? I did, for I had heard that he himself had made songs and hymns; and I asked him, "Are you a poet?" "Yes," he said quite simply, whereupon I spouted to him a bit of Manzoni's great ode (the *Cinque Maggio*), that which Gladstone translated. I don't know whether he relished it, but he began immediately to speak of Ugo Foscolo and quoted, with great fervour, a fragment of his *I Sepolchri*, beginning with "Il navigante che veleggio," etc., and ending with "Delle Parche il canto," which verses he afterwards wrote out for me; and they certainly seem to be fine, whatever the rest of the poem may be. . . . What a noble human being! I expected to see a hero and I was not disappointed. One cannot say of him what Chaucer says of the ideal knight, "As meke he was of port as is a maid;" he is more majestic than meek, and his manners have a certain divine simplicity in them, such as I have never witnessed in a native of these islands. . . . —Yours,

A. TENNYSON.

ED.]

p. 475. Verse ix. *your tale of lands*
I know not.

The tale of Nejd.

p. 475. Verse x. *Oriental Eden-isles.* The Philippines.

p. 475. Verse x. *wonder of the boiling lake.* In Dominica.

p. 475. Verse xi.
Phra-Chai, the Shadow of the Best.

The Shadow of the Lord. Certain obscure markings on a rock in Siam, which express

the image of Buddha to the Buddhist more or less distinctly according to his faith and his moral worth.

p. 475. Verse xi. *Phra-bat the step.* The footstep of the Lord on another rock.

p. 475. Verse xi. *Crag-cloister.* The monastery of Sumelas.

p. 475. Verse xi. *Anatolian Ghost.* Anatolian Spectre stories.

p. 475. Verse xi. *Hong-Kong.* The Three Cities.

p. 475. Verse xi. *Karnac.* Travels in Egypt.

p. 477. *To Mary Boyle.* [Written at Farringford and first published in 1889. She was an aunt of my wife's (Audrey Tennyson, *née* Boyle). In 1883 my father wrote to her: "I verily believe that the better heart of me beats stronger at 74 than ever it did at 18."—Ed.]

p. 478. Verse iv. *your Marian.* Lady Marian Alford.

p. 479. Verse x. *an English homestead Hell.* Near Cambridge, 1830. [See *Memoir*, vol. i. p. 41. Cf. *The Princess*, iv.:

> As of some fire against a stormy cloud,
> When the wild peasant rights himself, the rick
> Flames, and his anger reddens in the heavens.

p. 482. *The Progress of Spring.* [Written in early youth. First published in 1889.—Ed.]

p. 484. Verse v.

The starling claps his tiny castenets.

[My father said in 1889: "This line was written fifty-six years ago under the elms on the sloping field at Somersby, and then four or five years ago I see the same phrase (before the poem was published) in a modern novel, not taken from the poem, I presume, but I suppose the critics would not believe that."—ED.]

p. 488. *MERLIN AND THE GLEAM.* [First published in 1889.—ED.] In the story of *Merlin and Nimuë* I have read that Nimuë means the "Gleam," which signifies in my poem the higher poetic imagination. Verse iv. is the early imagination; Verse v. alludes to the Pastorals.

[For those who cared to know about his literary history he wrote *Merlin and the Gleam*. From his boyhood he had felt the magic of Merlin—that spirit of poetry—which bade him know his power and follow throughout his work a pure and high ideal, with a simple and single devotedness and a desire to ennoble the life of the world, and which helped him through doubts and difficulties to "endure as seeing Him who is invisible."

Great the Master,
And sweet the Magic,
When over the valley,

In early summers,
Over the mountain,
On human faces,
And all around me,
Moving to melody,
Floated the Gleam.

In his youth he sang of the brook flowing through his upland valley, of the "ridgèd wolds" that rose above his home, of the mountain-glen and snowy summits of his early dreams, and of the beings, heroes and fairies, with which his imaginary world was peopled. Then was heard the "croak of the raven," the harsh voice of those who were unsympathetic—

The light retreated,
The landskip darken'd,
The melody deaden'd,
The Master whisper'd
"Follow the Gleam."

Still the inward voice told him not to be faint-hearted but to follow his ideal. And by the delight in his own romantic fancy, and by the harmonies of nature, "the warble of water," and "cataract music of falling torrents," the inspiration of the poet was renewed. His Eclogues and English Idyls followed, when he sang the songs of country life and the joys and griefs of country folk, which he knew through and through.

Innocent maidens,
Garrulous children,
Homestead and harvest,
Reaper and gleaner,
And rough-ruddy faces
Of lowly labour.

By degrees, having learnt somewhat of the real philosophy of life and of humanity from his own experience, he rose to a melody "stronger and statelier." He celebrated the glory of "human love and of human heroism" and of human thought, and began what he had already devised, his Epic of King Arthur, "typifying above all things the life of man," wherein he had intended to represent some of the great religions of the world. He had purposed that this was to be the chief work of his manhood. Yet the death of his friend, Arthur Hallam, and the consequent darkening of the whole world for him made him almost fail in this purpose; nor any longer for a while did he rejoice in the splendour of his spiritual visions, nor in the Gleam that had "waned to a wintry glimmer."

Clouds and darkness
Closed upon Camelot;
Arthur had vanish'd
I knew not whither,
The king who loved me,
And cannot die.

Here my father united the two Arthurs, the Arthur of the Idylls and the Arthur "the man he held as half divine." He himself had fought with death, and had come out victorious to find "a stronger faith his own," and a hope for himself, for all those in sorrow and for universal humankind, that never forsook him through the future years.

> And broader and brighter
> The Gleam flying onward,
> Wed to the melody,
> Sang thro' the world.
>
> . . . .
>
> I saw, whenever
> In passing it glanced upon
> Hamlet or city,
> That under the Crosses
> The dead man's garden,
> The mortal hillock,
> Would break into blossom;
> And so to the land's
> Last limit I came.

Up to the end he faced death with the same earnest and unfailing courage that he had always shown, but with an added sense of the awe and the mystery of the Infinite.

> I can no longer,
> But die rejoicing,
> For thro' the Magic
> Of Him the Mighty,

Who taught me in childhood,
There on the border
Of boundless Ocean,
And all but in Heaven
Hovers the Gleam.

That is the reading of the poet's riddle as he gave it to me. He thought that *Merlin and the Gleam* would probably be enough of biography for those friends who urged him to write about himself.—Ed.]

p. 494. *Romney's Remorse.* [First published in 1889. —Ed.]

p. 498. line 24. *With Milton's amaranth.*

"Lowly reverent
Towards either throne they bow, and to the ground
With solemn adoration down they cast
Their crowns inwove with amarant and gold,
Immortal amarant, a flower which once
In Paradise, fast by the Tree of Life,
Began to bloom; but, soon for Man's offence
To Heaven removed where first it grew, there grows
And flowers aloft, shading the Fount of Life," etc.

Par. Lost, iii. 349–357.

p. 500. line 5. *my Indian brother.* When his brother arrived from India, Romney did not know him.

p. 500. line 12. *He said it . . . in the play.* Cf. *Measure for Measure*, III. i. 2:

"The miserable have no other medicine
But only hope."

p. 501. *PARNASSUS.* [First published in 1889. Norman Lockyer visited him in October 1890, and said of my father: "His mind is *saturated* with astronomy."—ED.]

p. 503. *BY AN EVOLUTIONIST.* [Written at Farringford, and first published in 1889. My father brought "Evolution" into Poetry. Ever since his Cambridge days he believed in it. He has given, perhaps, the best expression of this belief in a remarkable passage in *Sea Dreams*, beginning "But round the North, a light," vol. i. p. 505. There we have a dream of the restless spirit of progress throughout the ages, and the "note never out of tune" underlying it.—ED.]

p. 505. *FAR—FAR—AWAY.* (*FOR MUSIC.*) Before I could read I was in the habit on a stormy day of spreading my arms to the wind and crying out, "I hear a voice that's speaking in the wind," and the words "far, far away" had always a strange charm for me. [First published in 1889. He wrote this after his severe illness in 1888. As he was lying on his sofa in the window at Aldworth, and looking out on the great landscape of the weald of Sussex, he said that he had wonderful thoughts about

God and the Universe, and felt as if looking into the other world. Distant bells always charmed him with their "lin-lan-lone," and when heard over a sea or a lake, he was never tired of listening to them.—Ed.]

p. 506. *Politics.* [Addressed to Gladstone, and first published in 1889.—Ed.]

p. 507. *Beautiful City.* Paris. [First published in 1889.—Ed.]

p. 508. *The Roses on the Terrace.* At Aldworth. [First published in 1889. About this time he sent the following lines to Mrs. Richard Boyle for her *Ros Rosarum*:

THE ROSEBUD

The night with sudden odour reel'd,
The southern stars a music peal'd,
Warm beams across the meadow stole;
For love flew over grove and field,
Said, "Open, Rosebud, open, yield
Thy fragrant soul."

See also letter from my father to Dean Hole from Aldworth: "The Book of Roses was heartily welcomed by me: I do not worship the yellow but the Rosy Roses—rosy means red, not yellow—and the homage of my youth was given to what I must ever look up to as the Queen of Roses—the Provence—but then you as a great Rose master may not agree with me. I never see my Queen of

Roses anywhere now. We have just been planting a garden of Roses, and were glad to find that out of our native wit we had associated the berberis with them as you advise.—Ed.]

pp. 508, 509. *The Play*, and *On One who affected an Effeminate Manner.* [First published in 1889.—Ed.]

p. 509. *To One who ran down the English.* [Written at Aldworth, and first published in 1889.—Ed.]

p. 510. *The Snowdrop.* [Written at Farringford about 1860, and first published in 1889.—Ed.]

p. 511. *The Throstle.* [First published in the *New Review*, October 1889, and misprinted; afterwards in *Demeter and other Poems*, 1889. My father had been writing his poem, *By an Evolutionist*, between severe attacks of gout in the winter of 1889. He fed the thrushes and other birds as usual out of his window (at Farringford). Toward the end of February he sat in his kitchen-garden summer-house, listening attentively to the different notes of the thrush, and finishing his song of *The Throstle*, which had been begun in the same garden years ago:

Summer is coming, is coming, my dear,
And all the winters are hidden.

Talking of hopefulness, he said: "Hope is the kiss of the Future."—Ed.]

p. 512. *The Oak.* [First published in 1889. My father called this poem "clean-cut like a Greek epigram." The allusion is to the gold of the young oak leaves in spring, and to the autumnal gold of the fading leaves (at Aldworth).—Ed.]

p. 513. *In Memoriam—W. G. Ward.* [First published in *The Athenæum*, May 11th, 1889. Ward was a neighbour of my father's at Freshwater, and was one of the leaders of the Oxford Movement, and a great friend of Cardinal Newman's. He died in 1882.—Ed.]

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